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# THE RECORDING ANGEL

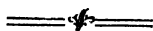
A REPORT FROM EARTH

*BY THE SAME AUTHOR*

THE EVOLUTION OF MODERN CAPITALISM  
THE CONDITIONS OF INDUSTRIAL PEACE  
INCENTIVES IN THE NEW INDUSTRIAL ORDER  
THE ECONOMICS OF REPARATIONS  
THE PROBLEMS OF A NEW WORLD  
DEMOCRACY AFTER THE WAR  
FREE THOUGHT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES  
WEALTH AND LIFE  
RATIONALISATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT  
POVERTY IN PLENTY

# THE RECORDING ANGEL

A REPORT FROM EARTH



J. A. HOBSON

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## A F O R E W O R D

It is perhaps not generally known that the usual Centennial Report upon the condition of our Earth has recently been made at the Office of the Recording Angel. By a curious chance some fragments of this Report, taking shape in a dialogue between the Messenger from Earth and the Recorder, have fallen into my hands. I here publish them in the hope that they may prove as interesting to the general public as they were to me.

J. A. HOBSON

*June 1932*



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# THE RECORDING ANGEL

## FIRST SESSION

*The RECORDING ANGEL is seated in his Office at his desk with a file of papers before him. His Clerk ushers in a MESSENGER who, after exchanging greetings with his chief, takes his seat with folded wings.*

**RECORDING ANGEL.** It is well you acquainted me with your arrival yesterday, for it has given me time to refresh my memory regarding the past Records of the little planet with which your Centennial Report deals.

**MESSENGER.** Your Honour may remember that in far distant times the All Highest set it aside as an experimental station on which to try out some interesting speculations about reason and self-determination.

**R.A.** Oh, yes. Your early Reports give a clear account of this very troublesome experiment. The All Highest, as I understand, took one of the higher primates and injected into him an extra powerful strain of curiosity and social feeling, and then set him "free" to see what sort of a life he would make of it.

The early results were not encouraging, and from time to time the All Highest was forced to intervene and make some alteration in the terms of his experi-

ment. His first man and woman failed to act according to expectation. The curiosity with which they were endowed turned out to be too powerful. Bored with an easy life of idleness they started experimenting on their own account, and getting on too easy terms with the cunningest of animals, wanted to know more than was good for them. This, of course, offended the All Highest, who didn't want his gifts put to such wrong uses. So he turned them out to work for their living.

Intended as a curse, this new condition was soon seen to be a blessing. For it kept curiosity from wanton speculation by putting it to practical uses, and found a scope for social feeling in cooperation.

At first under the new conditions the experiment worked better. But not for long. For I find quite early in the Record references to outbreaks of pride and self-will which pained and angered the All Highest. Disobedience to his law became almost chronic. Only one of his commandments was readily obeyed—the order to be fruitful and multiply, and that, as subsequent records showed, was always carried too far.

After due warnings, which were ignored, the All Highest took drastic measures. His famous Water-cure was so effective that it washed away men's wickedness and restarted the human experiment pretty nearly in its original dimensions.

This improved matters for a time. But the old trouble (later on it was called "original sin") reap-

peared. Man's sense of his superiority over other animals kept filling him with pride and driving him into excesses. Men found the earth no longer good enough. They must seize Heaven itself, for they resented as a taunt the intended compliment "a little lower than the angels." Hence their building exploit of Babel. But the All Highest seems easily to have outwitted them by the simple device of confusing their tongues. This broke up their conspiracy, and the experiment itself became a multitude of separate experiments in different parts of Earth.

But I must not spend too much time over these early records, for I am anxious to get your latest news.

M. No, Sir, you waste no time in thus recalling early records. For in no other way can we get the true perspective of present happenings. I would beg you to continue.

R.A. Well, I will briefly sketch some further phases of the great experiment, so as to bring out the general character in man's different attempts at what he calls "civilization."

The word, indeed, is itself significant. For by its close association with the thing called "progress" it betokens that man thinks better of himself when he quits the soil, to which as an animal he properly belongs, and becomes a dweller in a city. The contempt of the citizen for the rustic is, indeed, an index of that infatuation which values civility and politeness above robust simplicity. The history of man may be



summarized as the record of his various attempts to better himself by this process of self-destruction. From polis to megalopolis, from megalopolis to necropolis—such has been the story of countless civilizations. For great cities have ever become seats of mingled luxury and poverty, both enemies of virtue and breeders of vice. When their sins are grown rank, the All Highest has sent against them outside hordes of unspoiled herdsmen and peasants to destroy them. It was so even with his Chosen People. So soon as they had carried out his will in conquering the domain allotted to them, instead of extirpating the heathen, they kept them as tillers of the soil, taking rich toil of their labour, and often taking on their false gods in addition to their own. The All Highest, justly jealous but less quick to anger than in earlier times, sent Prophet after Prophet to turn them from their wicked ways. But it was useless. A term of banishment and enslavement to foreign masters did them no good. They came back with more strange gods and new sins. The All Highest, with all his patience, could put up with them no longer, and so scattered them over the face of Earth to bring and suffer trouble wherever they appeared.

Such, in general terms, has been the story of civilization. The ingredients which the All Highest relied upon for his experiment, reason and social feeling, have proved disappointing.

But maybe you bring in your latest Report some fresh rays of hope. For he is reluctant to abandon the

human experiment. Indeed, your recent Centennial Reports have seemed to indicate the possibility of a civilization broader-based and more enduring than any of the preceding ones.

*M.* Perhaps, Sir, you will allow me to preface my fresh Report with a few general observations on what may be termed the externals of the situation. It is certainly the case that the latest civilization is broader-based than any of the earlier ones, in that the different countries of Earth and their peoples have been brought into so much closer contacts that anything of good or evil that happens to any one of them is more quickly communicated to the others than was formerly the case.

But this broader base for civilization and its closer contacts are distinctively material in character. They are chiefly the results of progress in knowledge of the outer world, conquests over the barriers of space and time which formerly confined the lives of most men within narrow habitats, exchanges of their products to narrow local markets, while even the most important events in one country reached the inhabitants of other countries after a long interval of time, if at all. The swift, sure, easy movement of men, goods, news, ideas from any part of Earth to any other is the distinctive achievement of Western civilization. It marks man's new era of triumph over his material surroundings. It is a great and rapid extension of the reign of reason in the field of material equipment. Unfortunately it has been accompanied by no corresponding

growth of moral contacts. Facilities of travel and of trade, which have made men know more about their fellow-men than formerly, have not made them love one another. It is this wide and ever widening divergence between the processes of material and moral progress that is the most disconcerting factor of my new survey.

R.A. You do, indeed, strike an alarming note. But possibly your recent visit has brought you to Earth at an unfortunate moment, and your sympathetic nature has taken too gloomy a view of the mundane process.

M. Indeed, I hope this may be the case. But perhaps I had better lay the situation before Your Honour as I have found it. And I can best begin by brief reference to my last Centennial Report. A hundred years ago I found most of the peoples of Earth still steeped in the slumber of age-long traditions and instincts, broken by occasional ravages of nature or of neighbouring man, but showing no marked traces of change, except where contacts with Western man had been established. But turning to the habitat of Western man, I found him slowly emerging from the havoc of a devastating war that had spread over the entire continent, and had left all along its bloody course a train of desolation and of misery.

R.A. Nothing new in that. Western man, as the Records show, has always been a fighting animal.

M. Yes, but this war and the peace which followed were different from any that preceded. They were the

product of a revolutionary change of thought and feeling: whole peoples were led to follow the banner of ideals. Freedom, democracy, nationality, were the rallying-cries, employed by ambitious statesmen-soldiers to compass their personal ends. The war was a war to end war, and the peace was designed to make the world safe for Autocracy. The unity and stability of Europe were to be established by a Holy Alliance of divinely appointed Princes.

R.A. And were peace, unity, and stability obtained?

M. No, Sir. They were not. These ideals, the showy emblems of a boasted Age of Reason and a Religion of Humanity, were put into the cupboard as soon as they had served their purpose, and the hard, practical men took charge of the situation. There was no peace. The century was spattered with large and little wars and revolutions. The world was not made safe for Autocracy, or indeed for any other sort of government. While Democracy was in many countries the acknowledged Heir Apparent, nowhere was it allowed to seat itself upon the throne.

R.A. Not even in the great new Western country across the ocean?

M. No, there least of all, as will be seen when I make plain the true meaning of Democracy.

But let me now return to my immediate object—the striking resemblance of my latest survey to that of a century ago. The same war to end war, the same disastrous peace, the same slow struggle for recovery, thwarted by the same collapse of reason and goodwill,

in a feeble endeavour to establish a lasting peace by an Alliance of Nations (no longer self-styled "Holy," to its credit).

But with these resemblances there are important differences, due to the wider and closer contacts between the peoples of the world which are the chief fruits of a century of Science. Never before had the term World War been applicable, for never had it been possible to bring all peoples into simultaneous conflict. This meant a far wider range of destruction both of men and wealth, and a larger legacy of waste, misery, and ruin in all human arrangements. There is no longer a New World that can be called in to redress the balance of the Old. For old and new alike are smitten.

*R.A.* But this I cannot understand. If Science has so improved the means of human intercourse, surely reason and goodwill, the divinely appointed guides of conduct, should have brought peace and plenty, not war and poverty.

*M.* Yes, Sir. So it might seem. And men dreamed and spoke and wrote a century ago of the coming Reign of Reason and the New Moral World which man, the ruler of his fate, now released from the bonds of ancient tyrannies and superstitions, would accomplish within a single generation. As physical science had placed wealth beyond the dreams of avarice at man's disposal if only he would peacefully cooperate with his fellow man, so the sense of human brotherhood, breaking the barriers of city and of

country, would pulse freely through the world and make it one in feeling as in fact. Thus would the world become a single commonwealth.

R.A. Surely a consummation devoutly to be wished. The health, wealth, wisdom, happiness of man were only thus attainable. Such was assuredly the purpose of the All Highest. What was the impediment?

M. Before these great ideals could clothe themselves with political and other practical arrangements, the great Adversary put his poison into the minds of the rich and the rulers in every land. Did they really desire a single community, where all the means of happiness, including Wealth, would be common? Did they want a society associated by a single purpose—Socialism? Were they prepared to give up the superior wealth, power, and prestige they held as a class over the common people, as a nation over the lesser breeds upon the earth?

To turn good into evil has ever been Satan's proper work. So here he took Reason and set it to the service of Materialism, suggesting ever more ingenious devices for machinery and luxury within the control of the ruling and possessing class—the system commonly called Capitalism because the control lay not in the hands of those who did the work but of those who owned the capital.

And he took the social feeling, the sense of human brotherhood, and broke it up into the separatist sentiment of Nationalism. So reason and sociality

were converted from the friends into the enemies of humanity.

R.A. I still don't quite understand how he achieved his evil end. Surely capital, the instrument of industry, is useful not only to its owners but to the working classes, while nationality is a fine and serviceable sentiment among the members of each nation.

M. Yes, and just here lay the cunning of the Adversary. He sent two lying spirits to corrupt the services which capital and nationality could render to humanity. Capital he perverted into Capitalism, Nationality into Nationalism, and the sting in this tail was poisonous, for Capitalism bred class-war and Nationalism the Great War, whose ashes are still smouldering.

R.A. What exactly do you mean by your two lying spirits?

M. The first appeared in the guise of reason itself. It seized the minds of philosophers, economists, historians, and other men of learning. Whereas the eighteenth century of our Lord evoked a cosmopolitan or humanitarian politics and ethics, and some of the wisest men spoke of themselves as "citizens of the world," the nineteenth century, after the idealism of its early decades, stamped out the wider thought and enthusiasm. In Germany Hegel's God-State, absolute alike in its authority over its own citizens and in its severance from other States, displaced his predecessor Kant's "Perpetual Peace" by world agreement. In France "La Patrie" had devoured the

generous internationalism of the Revolution, and the ethics of "my country right or wrong" was universally accepted.

But in Britain the lying spirit worked differently, adapting itself to the special causes and circumstances of this strange country. Earlier in action and more adventurous than other peoples, Britain had gathered under her control a large variety of scattered markets and areas of economic development which formed her Empire. Her expanding Capitalism also made her the workshop of the world, in that she required close relations with other lands outside her Empire for the disposal of her surplus goods. So it was that the close Nationalism of other countries was crossed in Britain by wider currents of material interests.

Though philosophy, or any general thinking, had little direct influence on this insular people, the pressure of its interests evoked a distinct type of social theory that was deeply embedded in nineteenth-century policy. It had been most clearly formulated by that son of Adam who modestly attached the undistinctive name of Smith. His ethical teaching of the "invisible hand," which sanctified selfishness by maintaining that every man consciously seeking his own selfish end was led along a line of conduct most beneficial to his fellow-men, served through later generations as the spiritual defence of a business world in which all the freedom of choice and opportunity needed to give plausibility to such a doctrine was manifestly lacking, and where combination was



rapidly displacing competition. Yet the theory that social service cannot be allowed to take the place of personal private gain as the governing force in industry still remains the accepted principle of the rulers of economic thought and practice. The idea that man is really a social being and that his reason can be applied so as to make his social cooperation effective for the common good is still regarded as the supreme economic heresy. So successful has the Adversary been in sowing the seeds of spiritual anarchy.

R.A. Excuse my interruption, but aren't you spending yourself overmuch in generalization? The Adversary surely doesn't trust to the feeble influence of theorists, philosophers, or economists to do his poisonous work. The Prince of Darkness is a practical person and gets right on to the job.

Indeed, you yourself admit that these islanders of whom you speak are not deeply moved by what you call "social theory." But who are these Britons anyway, and why does your Report put them so much in the foreground?

M. Well, Sir, Nature and History have combined to put them in the foreground. Their little island, lying just west of the great land-block, became in early days the dumping-ground of pirates and buccaners from all neighbouring countries. With the spirit of seafaring adventure in their blood, they set out later on to seize for plunder or for trade choice portions of Earth, and, as settlers and rulers, built

up the largest system of human and commercial intercourse the world had known. Their situation, natural resources, and character gave them a long start in those processes of machine-capitalism that are everywhere transforming human life for good or evil. No people are at once so conscious of their insularity and so dependent for their very existence upon the outside world. It is this position and the character that belongs thereto that makes them the best centre for my Survey. Their great adventure in history has bred in them a sense of divine mission, and they sometimes speak of themselves as God's Englishmen.

R.A. This is quite new to me, and I can assure you has no foundation in the mind of the All Highest. Once he had a Chosen People, but when they went wrong he never took on any other. But after all there can't be much harm in thinking yourself the special charge of the All Highest. It may help to keep you straight.

M. Unfortunately it doesn't always act that way. For instead of humbly receiving and executing the Divine behest, God's self-appointed nominee proceeds to sanctify his own desires and interests and deems it his duty to impose his will, his culture, and his profitable trade upon the poor benighted heathen. To feel that you are doing the Lord's will while you are filling your pocket out of the forced labour of weaker people—you call it teaching them the dignity of labour—is a new sort of spiritual economy for the

modern Englishman. It reconciles God and Mammon, giving him what his peculiar nature always requires—the best of both worlds.

*R.A.* Are you bringing against God's Englishman the charge of hypocrisy, "the sin which neither God nor man can well forgive"? Are you competent to draw such an indictment against a whole people?

*M.* Your Honour must pardon me. I failed to make myself understood. I bring no such accusation. The Englishman is quite sincere in his lofty professions. If his idealism is somewhat vague, that indicates its elevation. He needs what his vulgar language calls "a spiritual boost" to impel him to those arduous tasks which are for the benefit of other people. This elevation of the national spirit as an operative influence is named Imperialism—it is the white man's burden, his duty to his neighbour in the great human family. If it brings him power, prestige, and material wealth—why, these are but incidental to his mission, things added unto him, a trifling recognition of his services.

*R.A.* But surely the combination of idealism and business is a difficult balance to preserve!

*M.* It is indeed, and following the more conscious current of Imperialism in the past half-century I observe a clear illustration of the economy of division of labour. The sentimental devotee of Imperialism stays at home, while its executive, the men upon the spot, concentrate more and more upon its practical aspects, power and profit. The failure to observe this

economy with proper precision is always a source of trouble. The missionary, for instance, does not always interpret properly the true imperial mission; when he seeks to plant certain dangerous seeds of Christian teaching about the liberty and equality of man, he is apt to impair the needed discipline of native labour and injure the material development of the country. Idealism, it is felt, should keep to its proper rôle, the giving of a moral and religious sanction to the great imperial enterprise.

With Satan turning the wholesome sense of nationality into aggressive nationalism, and competing empires, at the instigation of hard-headed business men, set about converting all the backward countries of Earth into spheres of influence, protectorates, and other subterfuges for political and economic conquest, half his poisonous work was done. Nationalities were perverted into Powers engaged in deadly conflict for the riches of Earth by the expansion of profitable markets. A world of peaceful cooperation for human wealth and happiness was made into a world of wars, whose area of conflict and methods of frightfulness were the direct fruits of reason applied to the service of destruction.

R.A. Yes, it cannot be denied that here Satan has scored a goal. But you mentioned another line of work in which he has been poisonously active. What is that?

M. The corruption of the other great principle of social conduct, which in loose alliance with Nation-

ality was struggling to pass from a revolutionary ideal into a working actuality during the past century. I mean Democracy.

R.A. This word seems rarely to appear in my Record. I find some brief, not very satisfactory references in an account of Athens and a few other little city states in the period B.C. Then it seemed to have died out even as an aspiration or ideal until the period covered by your last two Reports, when it figures in the formulas of what you call the Revolution. Do I understand you to say that it has now become a reality, that peoples really govern themselves, disposing of the resources of their country and ordering all the affairs of their community by the will of the common people?

M. No; I regret to say that the great conditions attached to Democracy by the eighteenth-century revolutions—liberty, equality, fraternity, and its real content, the equal right of all to the means of happiness—have never yet been obtained on any satisfactory scale.

R.A. Your statement is most disconcerting. The All Highest assuredly intended to endow all men with the faculties of reason and social feeling so as to enable them to regulate their conduct, whether in their individual or their group capacity. All men are thus by Nature equal. Their needs, their capacities, their rights are substantially the same. If some individuals are stronger, cleverer, more fortunate than others, these differences count for nothing as com-

pared with the capacities and needs they have in common. These little superiorities of body, mind, or estate should not intrude themselves upon the government of man for the attainment of happiness. Their possessors are thereby enabled to make a somewhat larger contribution to the service of mankind. Is not that the right interpretation of the will of the All Highest, and should not the common sense of men assent to it, and embody it in their conduct of self-government?

*M.* What Your Honour says is perfectly correct. Unfortunately the Adversary has seized upon that very principle of human equality and erased it from the contents of Democracy.

*R.A.* But how has he done this?

*M.* First, by dividing the indivisible, by separating political equality from economic and social equality, and secondly by whittling down political liberty to the casting of a vote every few years for the plausible adherent of some skilfully decorated party policy and by the artful management of that force called public opinion.

*R.A.* This sounds too vague. Can't you give some concrete illustration of Democracy in working?

*M.* Yes. Fortunately, just as I was finishing my Survey, a particularly instructive example occurred in that country to which I have given my special attention. The occasion was the selection by popular choice of local representatives to sit in the national assembly to make laws and administer the national policy. It

was a moment of grave emergency. The ruling classes in politics and business were determined to enforce their verdict and their will upon the electorate. The method by which this is done is called "propaganda," which, as the time for casting votes draws near, takes shape in panic cries of fear and hate assailing the ears and eyes of the electorate. The real issues that lay behind the propaganda were of a financial nature far too subtle to be presented to the people. The ruling classes, therefore, set themselves to convert those issues into simple emotional appeals which their skilled craftsmen call "slogans." The victory at the polls is won by the party that performs this operation most successfully. In the case I witnessed the victory was won by a composite appeal to the three supreme objects of worship that constitute the real religion of the people.

R.A. Here again you mystify me. Surely these Britons are a Christian people. How can this political appeal be addressed to the three persons of the Trinity?

M. I see I again owe you an apology for failing to make clear the distinction between the formal and the real religion of this curious people. But pray allow me now to put into brief dogmatic statement what here I signify by their real religion, leaving the more detailed account of this religion and its relation to the worship of the All Highest for consideration later on.

There are, I repeat, three articles of faith in this real religion, directed to three objects of reverence and

worship. The first is King and Country, and the emotion of sanctity that attaches to them is Patriotism. This sentiment can be evoked at any time by a hymn attesting the special regard of the All Highest for his earthly vicegerent or even by the waving of a rightly coloured piece of cloth. That this sentiment carries a real content of worship is attested by the nature of the horror felt at anyone who should insult the flag or refuse to rise at the sound of the national hymn. But to possess this sentiment successfully for party politics it was necessary to divest yourself of the party garb and to stand out boldly as the representative of the nation. Thus it was possible to secure the passion of Patriotism on your side.

But Patriotism is not enough. It needs the intimate alliance with another worship, the nature of which I will disclose a little later on. Even "the Chosen people" of the All Highest, you will remember, easily succumbed to the worship of the golden calf, and the Romans, a people whose religious feelings were intensely practical, recognized a certain holiness in money. *Auri sacra fames*. You may think this to be a low, selfish, materialistic form of worship. But it kindles a real sentiment of reverence. It is holier than human life, for men will more readily sacrifice their sons to Moloch than their money, as the experience of the Great War testified.

It was the union of these two sanctities that made the staple of this grand electoral appeal. "Save your country and your savings" gave a useful combination



of the ideal and the practical in the Englishman's religion. But the "fear" emotion needed to stampede the herd-mind demanded the addition of one more sacred ingredient to ensure success. The enemy must be presented not only in the garb of traitor and robber, but of coward. This charge is based upon the third element in the real trinity of English worship—Sport. To this people the shooting of a fox is an act of sacrilege, the pulling of a horse a sin. The most "pious" exhortation of this people is "be a sport." The success of the National appeal must therefore be clinched by charging the enemy with being "quitters." "They ran away" was the final charge of irreligion which brought the condemnation of the electorate.

R.A. You give a strange account of the collective behaviour of this people during a century of so-called Progress. Has Progress, then, no human significance?

M. Ah, just here you touch a most interesting and perplexing paradox. I have already indicated the immense strides which Western science has made in most paths of material progress during the last century, the conquest of the physical environment of man. This is sometimes represented as the triumph of the machine for the enslavement of mankind, or at any rate for the repression of his finer qualities and activities. But this is not the truth. For, though machinery and the other products of the sciences have not been of equal service to all peoples and all classes, they have brought even to the poorer and weaker members of each community some enlargement of

liberty. They have lightened the burden of toil for most workers and broadened the margin of free time and energy at their disposal. If only the services of the machine were equally available for all classes and all peoples, its liberating mission would stand out as the greatest single contribution of human reason to the achievement of human happiness. The failure to fulfil this mission marks the most conspicuous failure of progress in the sphere of morals. But I do not wish to exaggerate this failure or to deny that some substantial advance has been made in the behaviour of men and in the achievement of human happiness.

Man's life in the Western world has gained both in richness of content and in duration. Diseases such as typhus and smallpox, which ravaged whole populations a century ago, have virtually disappeared. Infant mortality has been reduced to a mere fraction of its former size. The standard of living for all the people in food, clothing, even housing, is far higher than at the time of my last Report. There is for all more free access to education, recreations, and amusements. But important as are these gains, they may be imputed to distinctively economic improvements. More significant for our present purpose are the changes in the human heart—sympathy with suffering and active benevolence. In the great post-war depression of a century ago starving families clothed in rags wandered over England seeking work, food, and shelter in vain and perished by thousands. The death-roll was enormous, and the safe and prosperous

classes paid little heed, except when rioters plundered shops in desperation and were subjected to barbarous penalties by the outraged law. Now the economic depression is at least as severe, but the displaced workers are kept alive. This new attitude and treatment are partly no doubt due to apprehension of a revolutionary movement, but they also betoken a higher sensitiveness to the sufferings of others. The same blend of self-protection and genuine humanity is seen in the great improvements made in the hygiene and sanitation of their cities, which a century ago contained not houses but hovel-shelters for sweated, short-lived workers. The brutality of life was then exhibited in the habitual treatment of the weak and suffering. The domestic and the industrial treatment of women and of children by the despot of the factory or the home were such as would arouse the indignation even of the least sensitive citizens of to-day. Paupers, idiots, the insane, and the criminal were subjected to such physical and mental cruelties as would nowhere be tolerated to-day, except perhaps in the more secret recesses of barbarism in Italy or the United States. A not less conspicuous sign of moral progress is the kinder treatment of the lower animals in most Western lands. This keener regard for the well-being of others is associated with a higher standard of self-respect. The excessive use of strong drinks, Your Honour may remember, is a peculiar characteristic of man.

R.A. Yes, an early instance, if I remember cor-

rectly, occurred in the case of that righteous man Noah, who, after the excess of water he had suffered, fell a victim to the opposite extreme.

*M.* Your memory, Sir, is correct, and among Western men in later ages strong drink has everywhere been a chief obstacle to moral and material progress. A century ago drunkenness was an almost invariable part of good fellowship in all classes, and was usually accompanied by sheer brutality of manners. In most grades of society it is now not tolerated and its rare lapses evoke blame or contempt. Manners in the artificial sense of polish and gentility may have decayed, but in their broader meaning, as consideration for the good of others, they have shown a marked advance. There is far more kindness, pity for the sufferings of others, and willingness to help in making other people happy than there was when I made my last Report.

*R.A.* This assuredly marks a measure of success in the great experiment. But you spoke of a great moral paradox. Where, exactly, do you find it?

*M.* Just here. This betterment of human relations, this kindness and regard for the rights and welfare of others, is confined more rigorously than ever to the members of each national group, the occupants of each country. Though travel and personal friendship may bring members of different nations into good relations, and science, art, and, to a less extent, literature may communicate across national frontiers, the wider concept of Humanity has made no visible

advance comparable with that made by the several nationalities.

Nor is that the measure of its failure. The social sentiment is not merely brought to a standstill at the national barrier, it has suffered a dangerous perversion. Nationalism, as witnessed to-day in competing armaments, hostile frontiers, exclusive tariffs, restrictions upon emigration, struggles for gold, has converted Nationality from an internal bond of union into an external policy of exclusion based on fear, suspicion, jealousy, and hate. It is this hostility of thought, feeling, and action, injected by the Adversary into the heart and conduct of the Government and policy of each separate nation, that puts the whole experiment of Humanity in jeopardy.

I have spoken of it as a paradox. For as yet there is no intelligible explanation why the powers of reason and cooperation, visibly triumphant within each political area, should be refused the right to extend their beneficent influence over the wider area of Earth, merging the narrower society of separate nations into the wider cooperation of Humanity.

R.A. Well, you have made good your paradox. But is not this a convenient time for a pause? Suppose that we resume our sitting after lunch.

## SECOND SESSION

*RECORDING ANGEL* (*addressing MESSENGER*). I was deeply impressed by the account you gave this morning of the advance made by the inhabitants of Earth in those branches of knowledge which enable them to win from Nature an abundance of all the material goods which man requires for his subsistence and enjoyment.

*MESSENGER*. Yes, Sir. It can truthfully be said that the command of Western man over the materials and powers contained in Earth is already so great that, if it were extended so as to include the backward countries and their peoples, it could easily supply all Earth's inhabitants, not merely with a sufficiency of foods, clothing, shelter, and other necessities, but with many of the conveniences and comforts not available a century ago even to the rich. And all this could be done in such wise as to reduce the burden of human toil, and so liberate a fund of larger leisure for each man's private use.

*R.A.* You paint an alluring picture. But I gather that though Reason has placed this immense power within the reach of man, he somehow fails to utilize it.

*M.* Yes. Indeed, the word failure does scant justice to the lamentable condition of Earth when I left it to make this Report. The very progress made by science in the arts of industry and agriculture was the instrument of ruin. Everywhere the bountifulness of Nature

was pouring forth corn and oil, coal and iron and all the materials man wanted for his own consumption and that of his machines, and yet in every country men were ceasing to cultivate the earth and to work the machines because it was impossible to put these foods and these materials into the mouths and hands that needed them. Everywhere man was crying "Halt" to the producing powers of Nature and of man. Idle hands and brains confronted idle tools and wasting fields.

R.A. Do I understand you to mean that human ingenuity became so productive that even after all men's needs were fully satisfied there remained a surplus of workers who were not wanted?

M. I fear, Sir, that I have not succeeded in making the situation of Earth quite clear to you. The stoppage of industry, restriction of output they sometimes call it, does not occur because all men's wants are satisfied. This is far from being true. While tons of wheat are rotting in American granaries, or are fed as fuel to engines, millions of people in China have been dying from starvation. In many countries of Earth the native population lives a life of bare animal subsistence, with no access to the comforts and enjoyments of civilization. Still stranger, in the very countries whose industry is checked because it was turning out too many goods, large numbers of the inhabitants are underfed, underclad, underhoused for lack of these very goods.

R.A. You amaze me. Can it then be true, as I

seem to recollect somebody suggesting, that this planet of which you speak may be the lunatic asylum of the Universe?

*M.* Alas, Sir! I fear that is a too benevolent interpretation of the situation. At first sight, indeed, it may appear the supreme example of unreason. But what we witness is a failure, not so much of Reason as of the other gift which the All Highest gave to man—social feeling, the sense of Humanity.

*R.A.* But how does this failure come about? Surely it is alike the interest and the duty of mankind to make the resources of Earth available for the common welfare?

*M.* Indeed it is. But here comes in the poisonous action of the Adversary, bent on thwarting the progress of Humanity. I have already mentioned the two wedges he has inserted so as to break up the common purpose of mankind—Class Conflict and Nationalism; how by the first he has set the owning and working classes of each nation in conscious opposition, and by the second has set each nation in antagonism to its neighbours.

*R.A.* You rightly call such action of the Adversary poisonous. But tell me, how does this moral poison bring about the material waste, poverty, and misery which you say has pervaded the world?

*M.* I will explain. The first source of conflict, that of classes, is commonly called Capitalism. It signifies that within each nation all the processes of producing wealth are controlled by the owning class with the



single object of getting goods made as cheaply as possible, so that the gain coming to the owners may be as large as possible. The wages of the workers are the chief cost of production, and must therefore be kept as low as is consistent with the maintenance of their working capacity. In the early stages of Capitalism the domination of the owners was accepted by the workers as natural and inevitable. They were taught that the All Highest had created some men to rule, others to serve. But as Capitalism fastened its hold upon hosts of workers who no longer owned a piece of land or a craftsman's tools, but were driven to work in factories, mines, and workshops owned by their masters, a feeling of conscious resentment arose. The new conditions of labour brought numbers of them into close personal contact. Education and agitation began to sow "notions" in their minds. So an organized demand for a share in the enormous increase of wealth set in. The workers believed they made this wealth and wanted their equitable share. The owners, believing that high wages, short hours, and other expensive conditions of labour made profit impossible, themselves organized for resistance. Economic conflicts occurred from time to time, inflaming this class feeling, until the ordinary mental attitude on both sides was one of veiled hostility. Even where, as sometimes happens, organized owners and workers get together and parcel out among themselves the gain, this gain is brought about by raising prices to other members of the community. So you get two

main cleavages within a nation: that of Capital and Labour in the several trades, and that of Producer and Consumer as final competitors for the gains of industry.

R.A. You speak of these as the main cleavages. Do you mean that other class discords exist?

M. Yes. Some trades are stronger than other trades, and both owners and workers in these trades take advantage of this strength to charge higher prices for their goods or services. Wherever competition is restricted to a locality or within the nation, prices and wages are higher than in trades exposed to outside competition. Agricultural workers are paid lower than town workers of far inferior skill, so likewise in the towns contrived scarcity enables compositors or bookbinders to earn far more money than skilled workers in more arduous occupations: women's work is lower-waged than men's, and, speaking generally, the most onerous and disagreeable jobs are lowest paid. Monopoly and scarcity, not skill and ability, are the chief determinants of gain.

R.A. But surely I remember in past Records that Holy Church recognized the principle of a "just price," and condemned all sorts of monopoly or usury.

M. That is true, Sir. But such regulations, never rigorously applied, were swept away in what was termed the era of free competition, when it was maintained that everybody was paid what he was worth.

R.A. Well, that sounds fair enough.

M. Yes, it sounded well. But it turned out that there was no accepted criterion of human worth, so it came about that every man's worth was what he could get. That is to say, bargaining power was the measure of worth. It mattered not whether the bargaining was between individuals or combinations, it was economic force, not justice, that determined the price. To each according to his strength, not according to his merits or his needs!

R.A. But these are Christian peoples. Surely they recognize the duty of sharing with their neighbours the good things of Earth?

M. Yes, they accept this teaching for Sundays, when no business is doing and the shops are shut. But on week-days such principles are found inapplicable. If they were seriously applied, why, Capitalism might lapse into Communism!

R.A. Just what is this Communism? I remember no reference to it in your last Report.

M. Properly speaking, it means that what each man shall do and what he shall receive depends upon the welfare of the community. Its working principle is: From each according to his capacity, to each according to his needs.

R.A. I must say that seems sound Christianity. But is this principle anywhere in practice?

M. One country, and that the largest in the Western world, has set itself quite recently to the application of this principle, with certain limitations, and, curi-

ously enough, it has coupled with this application a complete repudiation of the Christian religion.

R.A. You find that curious. But have you not yourself furnished a reasonable explanation? If the Capitalist peoples continue to call themselves Christian, though refusing to apply the plain teaching of Christianity to their social arrangements, is it not natural that such sham Christianity would be repudiated by a people that endeavoured to apply the substance of its teaching?

M. Perhaps you are right, Sir. That may be how it seems to them, for they constantly assert that Capitalists use the vision of a Christian Heaven as a dope to enable them to keep the workers in subjection to their profitable rule.

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R.A. But in introducing this Report you spoke of another source of discord, the Nationalism which divides the aims and activities of nations instead of uniting them in the common human enterprise. This surely is a serious state of things?

M. Indeed it is. And since the Great War it has spread like a cancerous growth over the whole body of humanity, breaking up its organic unity into isolated cells.

R.A. Is not your language a little too rhetorical? You mean, I suppose, that each nation seeks to confine itself to matters within its own control for the

benefit of its own people, leaving other nations to do the same.

*M.* Yes, that is how some present it. Let each nation "put its own house in order," then the whole world will be a goodly house of many mansions.

*R.A.* Well, what do you find wrong with this method? Surely each people knows most about its own affairs, and can best look after them.

*M.* Sir, I perceive that Your Honour, following the method of the Greek Sage Socrates, is engaged in "pulling my leg," if I may use one of Earth's recent colloquialisms. For nobody is better aware that no nation can live unto itself alone. The enlightened selfishness of the several nations cannot secure the welfare of humanity.

*R.A.* Yes, I admit that must be so. For it is evident that no nation possesses within its own territory all the material resources it needs for a satisfactory life. It should be equally evident that the cultural life of every nation must depend upon communication or cooperation with other nations. Surely this is generally understood on Earth?

*M.* That is so, and it forms a positive basis for Internationalism, the counter-current against Nationalism. And it is fortified by the fear lest Nationalism, leading to new group alliances to preserve what is miscalled the Balance of Power, may plunge the world into another war.

*R.A.* But why do you denounce this Balance of Power? Does not such an equilibrium make for peace?

*M.* The answer, Sir, is in the negative. For what each nation or group of nations desires is not a true Balance, but a favourable Balance. In fact, each group seeks to be stronger than the other groups, which in logic is a contradiction in terms, in practical affairs a conflict, first of competing armaments, and then of actual wars. This is well illustrated in the movement for Disarmament. Every nation is willing to disarm provided it retains the proportionate advantage it deems itself to possess in army, navy, or air force over its dangerous neighbours. Thus every art of diplomacy is used by each nation in order to disarm as little as possible itself and to make the others disarm as much as possible.

*R.A.* But don't the nations want peace? Aren't they sated with killing one another?

*M.* Oh, yes! They want peace. But their Governments put up an object called Security, which when you scrutinize it turns out to mean armed forces greater than those of their neighbours. Since this condition is unattainable by all, peace by Disarmament is made impossible.

*R.A.* You cite this as one illustration of the fallacy of Balances. Perhaps you have another in mind?

*M.* Yes, indeed I have, and one of widespread significance at the present time. The Balance of Power is duplicated in the Balance of Trade. Here, too, the Balance should be favourable, and a favourable Balance means that each nation sells to other

nations more than it buys from them. Indeed, this folly is, if possible, even more foolish than the Balance of Power. For in the latter case the active parties are nations and their Governments, whereas trade consists, not of national, but of individual transactions. England, France, Germany, America are not trading firms; they do not do business with one another. So far as the welfare of the world and its inhabitants is concerned, it makes no difference whether a business man buys from or sells to another business man living in the same political area or to a foreigner. And yet Nationalism tries everywhere to coerce the members of each nation to buy as little as possible from foreigners and to sell as much as possible to them.

R.A. Ah! What you say is very interesting. If a man sells more than he buys, he receives less than he gives. Yet I understand you to say that Christian ethics are disregarded by the workaday practice of business men. But this eagerness to sell and this reluctance to take payment surely betokens a philanthropy that seems incompatible with your earlier statement. Am I to understand that the business men of some nations are in the habit of giving away their goods?

M. There Your Honour touches upon an interesting point in current controversy. It is charged against certain nations that they indulge in a practice called Dumping, which means that they sell to other nations goods that cost them more to make than the price which they receive for them. In part, at any

rate, these goods are given away. But this, it is maintained, is far from being an act of Christian benevolence; it is held to be an act of malice designed to injure the recipient nation.

R.A. But how can that be? If anyone receives as a gift what he would otherwise be obliged to buy with the fruits of his own labour, surely he is benefited?

M. So it might appear. But this brings us down into the very vitals of Capitalism and the disease which now threatens its life. It will not have escaped you that, whereas our talk this afternoon began with Nationalism as a political sentiment dividing peoples and breeding hostility, we have almost insensibly drifted round to our earlier source of discord—Capitalism. This is no mere chance association. It is a conspiracy of the lower against the higher forces of Humanity.

R.A. This high-faluting language, if you will pardon the expression, conveys no clear meaning to me. Please put it more bluntly.

M. Well, Sir, I will. Nationalism and Capitalism are both policies that divide instead of uniting men, and both rest ultimately upon naked force—Nationalism upon force of arms, Capitalism upon starvation. The one arrays stronger against weaker peoples, the other, stronger against weaker classes. This is, however, only their action when we regard them respectively as political and economic forces. But politics and economics are not, and never have been, separate activities, and now they are more closely interwoven



than ever. Everywhere business interests, industry, commerce, finance, penetrate and dominate Governments and State policies. Everywhere Nationalism is the mask for the hard-faced business man.

R.A. Do you mean that statesmen are the conscious tools or dupes of business men, that their lofty professions of service to their country are mere blinds?

M. Far from it. For the most part their professions are quite genuine. The statesman believes himself to be actuated by regard for the good of his country, even when the policy to which he commits himself is manifestly moulded by Big Business. Indeed, so curiously constructed is the Englishman that he can often hold both these notions in different compartments of his nature, only bringing them into joint action for an emergency. That bloated type of Nationalism called Imperialism is such an instance of the combination of the ultra-patriot and the acquisitive Capitalist. The adventurous idealism of the Empire-makers has always carried in its wake development for dividends.

R.A. Wait a minute. You open up a new difficulty with this term Imperialism. Nationalism I begin to understand: the people of each country looking after their own interests within their own land. But this Imperialism seems to signify that some Nationalists insist on looking after other people's lands, and that for their own advantage, not for the advantage of those other peoples. If that be true, this expanded

Nationalism must destroy the Nationalism of the other people. Imperialism is thus the enemy of Nationalism.

*M.* Your Honour diagnoses the situation exactly, and incidentally lays bare one of the deepest sources of Earth's present troubles. For several centuries this policy of expansive Nationalism had been carrying on its Empire-building in all those backward countries where national sentiment did not exist or was too feeble, to offer resistance to an encroaching Power. But now, largely due to Capitalism itself, the railways and other networks of communications in backward lands, the gathering of their peoples into great cities furnished with the fruits of mechanical science and the rudiments of Western education, these peoples no longer consent to be the submissive tools of Western masters. The spirit of Nationalism is kindled in their souls, and soon becomes a fire of aspiration. They too are men, and they claim their heritage of human rights. This growth of Nationalism is everywhere challenging Imperialism. Great Eastern countries have been awaking from the disturbed slumber of ages, and wish to conduct their own political government and their own economic development.

*R.A.* And why not? They surely must know their own needs better than the strangers within their gates, and they will have learnt from these strangers most of the secrets of Western science that are of use to them. If the Imperialists, as they contend, have been actuated by disinterested motives in extending civili-

zation to these backward peoples, they will recognize that, when the latter have learned what they require, it is time for their teachers to retire.

*M.* Yes. But the Imperialist peoples don't find it easy to retire. Even if they could swallow their pride of Empire, and were ready to hand over the posts and emoluments of government, their Capitalists would not allow them to quit. For, as I have intimated, Imperialism is Capitalism with a decorative front.

*R.A.* I am afraid I don't quite follow you. .

*M.* I think I can make it quite clear in a few sentences. The men who run Capitalism are not the actual owners and beneficiaries, but the managerial staff of the factories, railways, mines, ships, and finance, together with the salesmen of their products. Now this mechanical production thrives by turning out at the lowest costs the largest quantities of goods of identical types and sizes, and selling as many as possible to people whose standard of consumption is low and who cannot afford to be particular about quality, fit, or personal taste. By making and selling the largest quantities of such goods the managers of Capitalism make the largest profits for the owners of the capital. As new economics are made in the manufacture of such articles the effect is to increase the output, and since existing customers will have had their requirements satisfied, either the internal or the external market must be expanded.

*R.A.* Well, what's the trouble? If all the people in a country are sufficiently fed, clothed, housed, and

otherwise provided with customary goods, two courses seem open to your Capitalists. Either they can put their capital into new industries, satisfying new wants and desires for their own people, or else they can send their goods abroad to people whose needs for ordering machine-made goods are still unsatisfied. Or are there none such on Earth to-day?

*M.* Indeed there are. Countless millions of people in Asia and Africa to-day would eagerly purchase and consume the goods which the idle labour and machinery in England, Germany, America could supply, if they were able to do so. But the goods must be sold at a price that yields a profit to the Capitalists, and these Asiatics and Africans are too poor to pay that price. For most of the things they produce are needed for their own livelihood, and even if they have a surplus for the market the price they get is not enough to enable them to buy foreign goods.

*R.A.* Well, what about the other alternative? Surely there is no limit to the variety of new comforts and conveniences which the peoples of the Western countries can build into their rising standards of life. They could all do with a fuller supply of the new products of science, electrical appliances within the home, motor-cars, telephones, finer foods and drinks, amusements, and all the equipment of the wealthier classes. Or would such demands exceed even the new powers of production?

*M.* No. That is not the obstacle. The trouble here is just the same as in the case of the backward foreign

people. They haven't got the power to buy these goods, paying a price that would be profitable to Capitalism.

R.A. Do you mean that the very people who would make these extra goods would not be able to claim them for their own?

M. Yes. That is exactly the situation, though that is not how it appears to the owners and administrators of Capitalism.

R.A. But surely everything that can be made belongs to those who helped to make it? For if those who make a useful thing do not want it for their own use, they can exchange it for something they do want with someone else who wants it. This is surely the accepted principle of exchange.

M. Yes. But the difficulty arises just here. The owners of the machinery that turns out ever-increasing quantities of food, clothes, houses, furniture, typewriters, radios, and motor-cars can buy all they want of these goods with half the money that comes to them as rent, interest, and profit. The other half they save—that is to say, they keep it in banks or reserves, intending to buy more and better machinery in order to turn out ever larger quantities of food, clothes, houses, etc., for other people to buy and use.

R.A. But surely it is as serviceable to save as to spend, to buy more machines as to buy the goods these machines can make. The more machines, the more and cheaper the food, clothes, furniture the workers will be able to buy and use.

M. So it seems at first sight. But suppose that the All Highest were to send a prophet to Earth who should preach the gospel of an ascetic life with such success that all men cut down their consumption of food and all other goods to the lowest level, spending as little as possible upon them, it would be self-evident that they could not usefully apply their increased savings upon instruments for producing more of the very articles they no longer wanted. There would be no use for savings. Moreover, since it would be obvious that the machinery for producing foods, clothes, etc., was already excessive, because of the shrinkage of consumption, nobody would be so foolish as to make more machines. So the workers hitherto engaged in making machines and the materials and power required for their operation would now be idle, and would have no income wherewith to live even the simplest of lives.

R.A. But are you not making an absurd supposition? Nobody has ever paid serious attention to these prophets of the All Highest, even when they preached doctrines less ridiculous than this.

M. With all due deference, Your Honour, I suggest that my extreme case illustrates what is actually happening on Earth. The owning classes, though far from living an ascetic life, do find themselves in ordinary times with incomes far larger than they want to spend, and their attempt to save the rest, by buying more machines and working them so rapidly to enlarge the supply of goods which they refuse to

buy and which the workers cannot buy, brings about these gluts and stoppages.

R.A. I understand you to ascribe these recurrent gluts, stoppages, and unemployment to the inherent character of Capitalism. That is, to the organization of business for profit, not for social service. But how is it that a business people like the English do not recognize the accuracy of your diagnosis?

M. Because of the strange reluctance this people have ever shown to perform what they regard as the intolerable toil of thinking. In the palmy days of Capitalism, the middle of last century, they hadn't got to think. Rude, energetic action, along lines of obvious advantage, sufficed. When England was the workshop of the world there was no limit to the proportion of their income which the owners could save. For the surplus goods their machines turned out beyond the demands of their own population, together with the increased quantities of machine-made goods, could go to satisfy the needs and improve the transport and industry of other peoples in Europe and America who had only begun the march towards Capitalism. Just as any single man may save and utilize for his gain any proportion of his income he chooses, so may any class or any nation, provided that other persons, other classes, other nations, will buy or borrow what they save. But what any man or any nation may do, every man and every nation cannot. When all the Western nations are well founded in Capitalism, and some Eastern nations are advancing

on the road, the policy which England once practised with success alone becomes impossible for the Capitalist world as a whole. To adopt a vulgar English saying: "All nations cannot live by taking in one another's washing." All nations cannot sell more than they buy, lend more than they borrow, produce more than they consume, save more than they spend, work more than they eat.

R.A. Wait a minute. You are running on too fast. You charge nations with these absurdities. But nations consist of individuals. You cannot mean that there are many persons who love work so much that they don't mind what they eat or drink or where-withal they shall be clothed?

M. No; such persons are very rare, even among artists, intellectuals, and other cranks. People generally take all they can get for the work they do and spend it freely.

R.A. Well, then, are there many persons who lend freely of their superfluous wealth to their needy neighbours hoping for nothing in return?

M. Such generosity is uncommon. Most persons who lend, or, as it is commonly called, "invest" their surplus income, seek to get it all back with something extra—as much as possible.

R.A. Then am I to understand that nations live upon a higher Christian level than their individual members?

M. It might indeed appear to be the case to one who looks at the immediate situation upon Earth.



For the forgiveness of debt is urged by the statesmen of some countries as a first condition of salvation. Nor is this a case of sudden conversion. For many years past there has been a growing reluctance on the part of leading nations to receive from debtor nations the sums due to them. For such payment must be made in goods or gold, and foreign goods are so little wanted that every lending nation puts up barriers to keep them out, while large quantities of gold upset the level of prices and confuse all money bargains. In such circumstances it isn't possible for debtor nations to pay back what they owe, and even the interest they cannot pay out of their own resources, but must borrow from the lending nations.

R.A. Forgiveness of debts in such circumstances is not then a Christian virtue but a business policy!

M. Exactly so. But it is also the best example of what is coming to be called the Bankruptcy of Capitalism.

R.A. How so?

M. Well, you see, Capitalism requires a continually expanding market at a profitable price. Now, this expanding market cannot be got for all the Capitalists of a nation within their own country, because this business system will not work without large profits, rents, and other surplus income which is not spent in buying the consumption goods that Capitalism produces. Some of it is spent in buying luxury goods and services whose production lies outside the Capitalist

system. But most of it is spent in buying more machinery and other appliances for enlarging the output of Capitalism. This signifies that Capitalism must more and more depend for its profitable life upon expanding foreign markets. But as more Capitalist countries have entered these fields of investment, and some of the formerly backward countries have themselves entered the Capitalist area, sufficient markets for ordinary trade and for investment are no longer available, and so the profitable trade of the whole world is brought to a standstill.

R.A. You really mean that the world as a whole is able to produce so much more than it is able to consume, that idleness and stagnation are found everywhere. But this sounds sheer lunacy.

M. So it is, Sir, if by lunacy you mean the incompetence of man to make the best use of his control over natural resources for human enjoyment. But there are two possible escapes from the dilemma which the world presents. One is a more equal and more equitable distribution of the product of Capitalism as between the owners and the workers of each country, and as between the more advanced and the backward peoples of Earth—in other words, the substitution of a rationing system according to the needs of different classes and nations for the forcible scramble which has hitherto prevailed. This would, after all, be no new revolutionary principle, but only an extension of the rationalization already adopted in some provinces of Capitalism.

R.A. Rationalization? That is a new word to me. It suggests that "reason" takes the place of chance or force or habit. Is that so?

M. Yes, Sir, that is the case. In some Capitalist countries the wasteful competition of a number of independent businesses, each playing for its own profit, has given way to an orderly arrangement which controls the output of the whole industry, and allots to each business its proper part, arranging the operative and the selling prices on terms most advantageous to all the owners. Sometimes these arrangements go beyond the national area and allot the world-trade in certain articles in agreed proportions to the national groups.

R.A. You think this plan might be advantageously applied throughout the Capitalist system? But while I can see how such a planning would enable the owners to organize industries more efficiently and earn better profits, what about the workers in these industries and the consumers of their products? Where do they come in?

M. Sir, in your wisdom you lay your finger upon the two spots. Indeed, these two spots would be seen to fuse into one if, instead of considering industry as a number of separate businesses and trades, we took a really comprehensive view. For we should then perceive that unless adequate provision were made for enlarging the workers' and contracting the owners' share of the product, it would be impossible to get out of our dilemma, that of a productive power so

excessive that it must continually be held in leash by keeping idle plant and labour. Only by a more equitable distribution of the product can consumption keep pace with production. No abolition of tariffs, no monetary reforms, no remission of debts, no disarmament, will suffice to get Earth out of its trouble. These and other reforms, which would increase the productivity of industry, would not solve our problem, which is a problem of excessive productivity. Only by bringing reason and goodwill into a planned world-economy can security and prosperity be won.

R.A. Rather a large order this for nations so feeble-minded or so quarrelsome as you indicate. But before you reply, there is another way of dealing with your problem of accelerated productivity, on which I should like your judgment. Could not machinery manufacture more leisure as an alternative to more standard goods? And might not this leisure be a more valuable product?

M. Yes, assuredly, if the leisure could be properly distributed and used. Machinery produces plenty of leisure now, but is apportioned to the weakest sections of the workers and is called "Unemployment." In a reasonable world industry would be utilized partly in raising the standard of living for all the people, partly in giving them larger leisure.

R.A. Well! is it not possible to hope that men's common endowment of reason and goodwill are equal to the two related tasks that confront them? I mean the equitable distribution of income and of

leisure between the owners and the workers on the one hand, and the breakdown of the self-imposed blockade called Economic Nationalism upon the other. Is it impossible to get the strong classes and the strong nations to cease relying on their strength and to turn to reason and goodwill?

*M.* I can't give a certain answer to your question. The issue to-day trembles in the balance. But if, as I believe, Capitalism and its evil associate Nationalism are learning from bitter experience that their pushful selfishness can no longer be pursued with safety or with profit, but is paralysing industry and spreading poverty and desperation throughout the world, their rulers may take justice and courage into their counsels and change their evil ways in time to avert destruction.

*R.A.* Have they not prophets of their own, men called economists? May they not hear them and be saved?

*M.* Unfortunately the Adversary has displayed his cunning by putting a lying spirit into the mouth of most of these prophets, so that they still prophesy smooth things of Capitalism. If certain changes are made in the trading and monetary policies so as to adjust Capitalism to passing emergencies, all will come right again and Capitalism can once more resume its lucrative career, without any inconvenient concessions to the poorer classes or the weaker nations! For the word of these prophets excludes those considerations of equity and humanity upon which I have dwelt as irrelevant to their science and

as fatal to the arts of industry. This is natural enough, for their principles and laws have been moulded in due deference to the Capitalist system, and in defence of the inequalities upon which it has thriven. The sentiments of humanity which many of its prophets have expressed are merely expressions of a personal kindness or a sympathy unrelated to the rigours of their science.

R.A. This is sad hearing. To whom then can we look for the moral reformation needed to restore order and prosperity to Earth!

M. May I venture to suggest that Your Honour use your influence with the All Highest, that he turn the hearts of the peoples and their rulers to the paths of wisdom while yet there is time?

R.A. Here, my good Sir, you raise a matter of some delicacy. I feel that my personal intervention might be resented, especially if, as is possible, the All Highest has in his wisdom chosen this way of bringing this unfortunate experiment of his to a speedy ending. I think it would be better for any such suggestion to come from Earth itself. There still exist, I understand, a great number of Churches which have kept up some forms of communication with the All Highest. Could they not be brought into action?

M. Yes; that seems possible. And there are countless individuals who imagine that our Records are mainly concerned with their miserable little sins and sorrows and the saving of their own separate little souls. A concentrated rally from all these collective

and private sources might, you think, induce the All Highest to put a fresh dose of reason and justice into the rulers of Earth?

R.A. I don't think I should put it just that way. There is plenty of reason and justice knocking about on Earth, but it can't be got to focus on the great problems of conduct. What is wanted just now is a less elevated quality than these, something nearer to the self-protective instincts with which other animals are endowed. If it were possible to get the Churches and their attendants to unite in a simultaneous prayer for a little "common horse sense" to be put into the rulers of the nations, that might do the trick and save mankind from the suicide they seem at present bent upon.

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R.A. But, if you don't mind, we'll bring this session to a close. The trumpet has sounded for Evening Praise, and it might get us into trouble if we stayed away.

### THIRD SESSION

*RECORDING ANGEL.* Your Report has so far confined itself almost entirely to man's activities in the wider fields of social conduct. But man is not, in the first instance, a cooperative worker and a citizen; he is an animal with a body and a soul of his own, concerned with the affairs of himself and his family. Do you find any significant changes in man's thought and behaviour in this more personal field?

*MESSENGER.* Yes, Sir. And the very language you use—"an animal with a body and a soul"—strikes the keynote to a revolutionary change of thought during the past century about his constitution.

*R.A.* What do you mean "about his constitution"?

*M.* Just this. Hitherto man had never really admitted that he was an animal. He envisaged himself as a spiritual being, a soul in occupation of a body which was its temporary habitat, a burden from which he would rid himself at death, when his free soul would enter the eternal life which was its proper destiny. This conception he derived partly from the teaching of his Church, which discouraged laymen from close investigation into the structure and functions of the human body, partly from his sense of superiority over the other animals, and a desire to subject them to his will and desire as foods or instruments of service.

Pretending not to be an animal has been a chief directive influence in the building up of civilization.



The elaboration of his foods, his clothes, his housing, and all the material trappings of his life, his arrangement of sounds and sights into fine Arts, his play of curiosity about his environment that makes the Sciences, his elevation of instinctive feelings into lofty sentiments of ethics and religion—these achievements have appeared to man convincing evidence that he is not essentially an animal, but the possessor of a soul that dominates his body and has a separate source of being.

R.A. Well, is it not a good thing that he should hold this view? Has it not helped him to employ advantageously alike his body and his mind? No other animal has ever attempted such a development of mind and such a command over his environment.

M. Quite true, Sir. But all the same this self-glorification of man's spirit, with its depreciation of the body, and the pretence that the latter is or ought to be a servile instrument, has led to some injurious misconceptions. Though the older practice of asceticism and other maltreatments of this "vile body" have nearly disappeared from the Western world, the old conflict has been resumed with new spiritual weapons. For the progress made during the last century in the science of man has led to disturbances of life graver than those known as the Industrial Revolution.

R.A. You surprise me. What has this science done to disturb the world?

M. There came a man called Darwin in the mid-

century, who denied the story of the special creation of man and his peculiar divinity, putting man in his proper place as an interesting zoological specimen, an anthropoid who, endowed with the same equipment of instinctive urges and activities as others, managed to make better use of them and forged ahead, until his pride of achievement led him to repudiate his poor relations. This completely upset the story of Adam and Eve, and indeed the whole "apple-cart," for educated men and women. On the top of this discovery came the results of two new sciences, one searching into the history of primitive man and his ways of life, the other spying into the secret activities of his soul and laying bare their physical springs. Anthropology and psychology were the proud titles given to these studies.

R.A. But psychology must surely concern itself with the special study of the soul?

M. So one might suppose. And it was so with the first persons who called themselves psychologists. They studied the thinking processes, the emotions, and the will as purely mental or spiritual activities; only in handling sensations did they come into awkward contact with the physical basis of life. But as psychology has proceeded it has gone closer and closer into animal instincts and the physical conditions of human behaviour. For many psychologists consciousness itself has become a meaningless and unnecessary hypothesis: man is an automaton that performs even its cleverest tricks by reactions to

physical stimuli. Others are concerned with laborious attempts to rescue man's soul from the body of this death and to reassert for it an independent rule among the instincts under some such title as "reasonable will."

But, generally speaking, the psychologists have been obliged to have recourse to philosophers who, pressing into their service a new school of physicists, dissolve the whole universe into non-material stuff, so as to get rid altogether of the difference between body and soul.

R.A. Am I to understand that the only way to establish the existence of the spirit is to abolish the existence of matter?

M. Yes, that is about what it comes to. Nay, the new defenders of the faith go further. Not content with scrapping matter, they seek to scrap causation. The same causes need no longer produce the same effects, subsequent events are not determined by prior events, the discarded follies of chance and hazard are assigned places of honour in the new science. To such straits are intellectualists driven when they seek to apply their curiosity too far and try to understand that universe of which they are a humble part.

R.A. Why, yes. How can the part comprehend the whole? It is Eden over again.

M. It is even worse. To use a vulgarism of Earth, it is a man trying to lift himself by his shoulder-straps! But I have been led a little far afield from my main topic in to-day's Report—man's reluctant recognition that he is an animal. The recognition has two

humorously contradictory results. One I have already cited: the rapid fabrication of a philosophy to enable man's soul to swallow up his body and become a spiritual bit of a spiritual universe. The other shows man preening himself before his mirror for the handsome, clever, accomplished creature he has made of himself out of such unpromising material.

R.A. Well, he does seem to have made a much more successful use of his animal equipment than any other animal. But your Reports of yesterday indicated that the elaboration of one at least among his animal instincts—the fighting instinct—might even now get him into trouble.

M. Yes, and this fighting instinct, with its new direction to the acquisition of wealth and power, is closely associated with what may be termed the central instinct of sex and reproduction.

R.A. I don't quite see the connection.

M. Well, as I have already intimated, man from the earliest times took on quite readily the command of the All Highest to increase and multiply. But as each group or tribe had only a limited amount of earth at its disposal in which to grow its food, the increasing pressure on this means of subsistence drove him to encroach upon the land of neighbouring tribes who also were increasing in number and needed more land. Thus fights for food were the natural result of obedience to Heaven's command enforced by the sex instinct. The modern wars for markets and for Empire are but an extension of the primal struggle of

the individual to perform his duty of continuing and enlarging the species. Indeed, it was understood that this continuation and enlargement was the sole end and object of the individual. Perhaps the most notable achievement of modern man has been his revolt against this demand, and his insistence upon the individual's right to live, not for his offspring but on his own account. Pious people denounce this "birth control" as a direct defiance of the will of the All Highest.

R.A. Ah! What you say is very interesting. But perhaps both those who revolt and those who condemn the rebels would do well to remember that the All Highest has always exercised the right to change his mind in working out his most interesting experiments. Would it surprise you to learn that the All Highest was himself the instigator of this new human policy? When his first idea of a full orchestra for Heaven was realized, the banality of indiscriminate numbers became oppressive. For a time the tightening up of the entrance examination seemed sufficient, but then another difficulty arose. The other place became inconveniently congested, for though the Pit was described as bottomless, due allowance had not then been made for Einstein's discovery of the curvature of space. Thus a population problem arose in both departments of the spirit world. There was only one solution: to slow down the growth of numbers and to substitute quality for quantity. But how to bring this about? Perhaps you can throw light upon

the steps taken upon Earth to carry out this alteration in the purpose of the All Highest?

M. I think the outline is quite clear. At first the ordinary policy was followed, the inspiration of a prophet-preacher to deliver the word. At the very outset of my latest Record such a prophet was sent (his earthly name was Malthus). His gospel of restraint was received gladly by the educated upper class, not for their own practice, but because they thought it excellent advice for the lower orders. But the latter took no heed of it, partly because it never reached their ears, and partly because plenty of young wage-earners at that time had become a useful means of adding to the family income. But in any case it seems odd that the All Highest, with his long experience of man, should suppose it likely that a moral appeal should be able to put a curb upon the most intractable of human instincts.

R.A. I think you misunderstand the technique of Divine intervention. It is the usual method to send a preacher to prepare the way for the practitioner. There are several classic instances. I should be surprised if your Record does not reveal this policy. Was there no second prophet of birth control whose teaching was more effectual?

M. Your Honour is correct in your surmise. A generation later there appeared a great reformer whose name was Bradlaugh. But he repudiated the title of a prophet. Indeed, he even went so far as to deny the existence of the All Highest.

R.A. Ah, yes! Just so. It would appeal to the sense of humour in the All Highest to choose for his instrument such a man "to do his will and know it not." For I take it that this missionary did not labour in vain.

M. No, indeed. So soon as the barriers of Victorian prudery were broken down, and the elements of contraceptive teaching had reconciled the ways of God and Man, the growth of population in all civilized countries fell at an accelerating pace, and even the Churches (with one exception), which always lagged behind in interpreting the will of the All Highest, came gradually to accept the new policy with its far-reaching social implications.

R.A. What were these social implications?

M. Well, the first and most evident consisted of a revolution in the structure of the family. In some of the most ancient societies, Your Honour will remember, the mother ruled the family, the father, if recognized at all, being an occasional though necessary visitor. But, as civilization began, the superior physical strength of the male almost everywhere asserted its supremacy, and the functions he performed, as fighter, hunter, cattleman, medicine-man, gave his sex a peculiar prestige, although the woman's work in bearing and rearing children lay nearer to the prime purposes of nature.

As modern Capitalism advanced, and class distinctions became increasingly economic, woman tended more and more to become in the rich family

a doll, in the working family a drudge. There were, of course, many exceptional cases where feminine capacity and self-assertion reversed the rôles, the woman being ruler, "the grey mare," as the homely proverb dubbed her. But in most cases the family was in form and reality an autocracy of the male tempered by female arts of management. Man-made laws confirmed this position, delivering the person and the property of the woman to his possession.

R.A. Excuse my breaking in. This sociological disquisition seems a bit superfluous. I have read my Westermarck and other authorities. Can you not get to the point? Birth control, as I understand you, has revolutionized the family. But exactly how?

M. Well, it has given freedom to the wife and raised the value of the child. A century ago most women, during a large portion of their lives, were so occupied in bearing and rearing children that they had no social, economic, or civic life of their own. Even well-to-do women, who could put upon paid servants the chief care of their family and their house-keeping, were kept in physical bondage to the father-master during their best years. Working women, who added to motherhood the full charge of the house, had no effective liberty to earn an income, to develop their personality, or to amuse themselves. Children were too numerous for proper care, their death-rate was very high, but even the survivors were too many for proper feeding, housing, and clothing. Birth control has enabled both the women and the children



to assert and to obtain the right to live. By enabling married women to obtain paid work outside the home it has at once raised their economic status and the family income, while the reduced size of the family has raised the standard of living.

R.A. But doesn't all this threaten the very existence of the family? A woman with no children to speak of, a wage-earning career, money of her own to spend, and leisure for outside enjoyments, what is there left of home life?

M. Home life is bettered by being relieved of its oppressive burdens. The man is now kept in his proper place as equal partner in the family undertaking. It has not only liberated the woman, placing her on an equal footing with the man in the support and control of the home, but it has wrought an equal liberation in the life of the children.

R.A. Do you mean that children no longer obey their parents, their pastors and masters and others who are put in authority over them? Has discipline no longer any place in the family?

M. No. That would mean anarchy. But obedience and authority no longer occupy the place they did in the ordering of the family. Discipline has not disappeared, but in the home, as in the school, it is gradually shifting from the force-sanction of the old male despotism on to a basis of reasonable acceptance.

R.A. You mean that nowadays children only obey their parents when they judge their orders to be reasonable and agreeable?

*M.* No, that would signify a total absence of any natural element of sense and good feeling in the ordinary child. In every decent home the child finds from experience that its parents ordinarily tell the truth and that their advice is usually reliable. When different temperaments conflict in a family circle, the adjustments necessary to a peaceful home are better got where reasonable opportunities of self-expression are afforded to all members than where one dominant will suppresses all divergencies. Such conditions are, of course, more easily attainable in a small than in a large family, especially where the spacial limits of the home are narrow. Continual physical proximity of members of a family is the greatest barrier to free personality. That is why the housing problem is so urgent among the poorer classes of every country. A free mind requires a free body, and no body is free if it is continually liable to bump against another. Sufficient solitude and leisure are indispensable conditions for a free personality. Social progress may be measured in terms of their attainability.

*R.A.* But does not this control of birth bring the danger of such a decline of population that man may perish from Earth?

*M.* Hardly so. The desire for offspring is a widespread, though not a universal, urge in mankind. Those who have no natural love of children, or are too self-centred or too timid to run the risks of bearing and rearing them, will leave no offspring, and the task of continuing the species will fall to those

more courageous and better endowed for parenthood.

R.A. Stop a minute. May it not be argued that such a state of things leaves parenthood to the more reckless portion of the population and makes for the propagation of the unfit?

M. That indeed is said. And here we step from the quantitative to the qualitative aspect of the population question. A brand-new science called Eugenics has taken this topic for its own, and brings some formidable charges against the present control of population. Its prophets assert that in most civilized countries a selection of the "unfit" is going on, partly because the more valuable stocks refuse to do their share in parentage, and partly because the lower and less valuable stocks breed recklessly, while their inferior offspring is no longer allowed to perish in childhood as was formerly the case, but is kept alive by social hygiene practised at the expense of the thriftier and fitter members of the community.

R.A. That sounds a formidable indictment. Can it be met?

M. Well a good deal depends upon the meaning given to "fitness." Certain very high qualities of mental fitness seem incompatible with full, normal family life, or even with physical transmission. If a list were made of persons who would rank as men and women of genius, especially in the creative arts, it would be found that the number of their offspring fell far below the average of those belonging to the

same social class. But how far such rare talents are naturally incapable of transmission, or imply temperamental disqualification for family life, cannot be determined on the available evidence. It may be that here we are dealing with "sports." The Eugenist does not press this issue. Nor indeed does he rely chiefly upon the notorious tendency of the educated well-to-do upper and middle classes to restrict the size of their families, though this unwillingness to produce superior offspring for the advantage of society at large might be taken as evidence of moral unfitness.

R.A. Stop a minute. After all, the number of children in a family is surely a proper subject for the parents to decide, and, indeed, it is only they who can decide it.

M. I agree, Sir, that the decision rests primarily with the parents. But the secondary effect upon the size and the quality of the nation is far from negligible. It is now agreed by economists that for each country there is at any time an "optimum" population—that is, a population neither too large nor too small, but sufficient for the best use of the national resources. Now, we have no assurance that the separate decision of each set of parents, guided by their own interests and desires, will supply this "optimum." Still less is it assured that the best sort of offspring will be forthcoming if this all-important matter be left to private individual enterprise. Surely society as a whole ought to have a voice in determining such a literally vital policy. A nation, justly proud of its stock, its history

and achievements, may by a *laissez-faire* policy of reproduction dwindle and perish from Earth. In other words, the vital interest of the community may clash with that of the individual family.

R.A. Here you pose two related questions: the right quantity and the best quality of the new offspring. Are they quite independent questions?

M. Economists think not. The fears and hesitations of the better-to-do and more cultivated classes to marry early and to have offspring are attributed less to aversion from parenthood than to the insecurity of incomes and standards of living, and a reluctance to incur the risk of an expensive family. This may be cowardice or it may be reasonable caution, but in either case it proceeds from the failure of society to organize itself upon a stable basis of security. So the reluctance of the more cautious parents to help maintain an "optimum" population hinges upon defects in the social-economic system. Some feeble and ineffective attempts are being made to check the decline of the birth-rate by tax-remissions or by subsidies. But little can be achieved by such means. Nothing short of a social-economic reconstruction which furnishes to all families security for their standard of living will suffice to maintain a population appropriate to the size and character of each country and the opportunities of employment it affords.

R.A. But if each nation undertakes to regulate the size of its population it cannot ignore the Eugenist

consideration. It is clear that some human stocks will be more valuable than other stocks whether for breeding brawn or brains. How far do Eugenists claim that their science would enable them to provide the different brands of human efficiency that are required for a healthy, progressive society? Can they undertake to furnish a nation with the right numbers of able thinkers and workers in the arts and sciences, competent statesmen and civil servants, lawyers and doctors, efficient business managers, skilled clerical and manual workers for the various departments of the economic life of the nation?

*M.* No, Sir. Their science is far too rudimentary to enable them to make such claims. Nowhere are the opportunities of skilled experimentation for such purposes available. In theory the production of the best sorts of children should be the first of the productive arts to come under social planning. In practice it will be the last stronghold of individual enterprise.

*R.A.* Can Eugenics, then, do nothing?

*M.* Little, I fear, at present to justify its name of good breeding. Its practical influence is almost entirely confined to work at the lower end of the problem, the sterilization of physical and mental defectives. Later on a more positive Eugenics may be possible.

*R.A.* Do you mean you look forward to a time when in the daily press the announcement will be made that "a marriage has been arranged and will shortly take place" between Mr. A. and Miss B. with

a view to the provision of more competent biologists or better tennis players?

*M.* No. I don't think people generally will favour governmental control of mating. But if Eugenics were to advance far enough in Mendelian and other knowledge to be able to make reasonably safe predictions about the mating that would yield distinguished offspring, education, public opinion, and personal pride would conspire to bring about such marriages.

*R.A.* You mean that chance and caprice, or considerations of social status and property, would play a smaller part in determining marriage and parentage?

*M.* Yes. I think there would be a new application of the principle of "elective affinities"—partly instinctive, partly educative—which would draw man and woman into "fit" unions, where the deep-seated urge for a higher type of life would have far freer play than it has at present.

*R.A.* Are you not verging on the mystical?

*M.* The mysterious rather than the mystical, I think. And after all, we have good grounds for believing that the All Highest moves in a mysterious way. It is the mystery lying at the heart of things that is the lure to all science and all experiment. If everything were known, nothing would be done. The life-process would be robbed of its urge.

*R.A.* Perhaps that explains why the All Highest refuses to become All-Knowing. His interest in this

Earth experiment would evaporate if he knew exactly how it would turn out.

M. Yes; but this element of mystery doesn't mean that there is no order and causation in the instinctive urges—that sex selection, for example, is a chance or pure caprice. It must fit into some evolutionary scheme for the survival and the progress of man.

R.A. But are we then sure that there is such a thing as this progress? Would not such assurance do away with this very element of the mysterious which you say is necessary to life?

M. Yes, Sir, you are evidently right. But this is just where faith comes in, on a reasonable footing. If we really disbelieved in any process of betterment for ourselves and for humanity, every human activity would be sapped at the source, and the very process of reproduction would cease, as indeed it has in certain races reduced to servitude and despair. The persistence of the sex-urge is the guarantee of survival, and a certain fitness or virtue in its selective play is the guarantee of progress. This is the very core of what is meant by faith in humanity.

R.A. Your reasoning is specious. It perhaps comes as near to the truth as is attainable by mere angels. But granted that such a natural Eugenic process of selection can be secured by extending education and equality of opportunity within the area of each civilized people, so that they come to regulate the quantity and even the quality of their offspring by selection of fit parentage and rejection of unfit, there



seems to remain the larger problem of inter-racial selection.

*M.* Yes, Sir, and here you touch a matter so momentous in its issues that even the most enthusiastic builders of this new internationalism have not yet ventured to approach it. Although in my recent visit to Earth I found barriers set up by the different nations against the free passage both of goods and money from one country to another, such impediments are not considered permanent and immovable. The general tendency of the age is towards closer international intercourse, economic as well as cultural. The high tariffs and prohibitions that are immediate sources of so much trouble are commonly defended as temporary measures of emergency or as bargaining assets. There is little genuine belief in the possibility of economic self-sufficiency for any country. But so far internationalism has never fairly confronted the claims of men to the freedom of the earth.

*R.A.* You mean the right of the inhabitants of one country to trespass upon the country that belongs to others?

*M.* Yes. That is just how it seems to nationalists destitute of knowledge of their own history. The true-born Englishman—a mongrel composite of Celt, Saxon, Scandinavian, Norman, Dutch, all alike immigrants in past times—now refuses to admit foreign settlers, even if they bring superior skill and labour. The hundred-per-cent Americans, whose oldest ancestors were alien invaders of a foreign land less

than four centuries ago, have now shut their doors to all but a tiny flow of hand-picked immigrants. White Australians, after exterminating the natives of the country they invaded a century ago, not only refuse to populate and cultivate vast areas of the land that "belongs" to them, but deny admission to Asiatic peoples who could and would settle and cultivate them.

R.A. I see you hark back to the term "belongs to." Do you mean that Britain doesn't belong to its present inhabitants, or America to the Americans, Australia to the Australians? To whom *does* a piece of Earth belong?

M. By equity it belongs to him who can make the best use of it for his own advantage and that of the community.

R.A. What community?

M. Why, mankind, of course. But you are right in fastening on the words "belongs to" as the key of the situation. A thing belongs to one who has put something of himself into it, who has in a sense made it, has need of it, can best use it. The natural resources of the soil belong to nobody. If they are to "belong to" anyone, become his property, he must attach them to him by his work of cultivation.

R.A. But wouldn't it be very troublesome if anyone could come along and turn you out of the piece of land you occupied because he said he could make a better use of it, grow more food or extract some metal which you didn't know was there?

*M.* Yes, it would be very troublesome. And this trouble has been occurring in various parts of Earth. Whenever shrewd business men belonging to a civilized country discover backward countries containing rich, undeveloped resources, they plant their country's flag, and with its diplomatic and armed assistance develop these resources for their private gain, evicting the native population or conscripting their labour for their farms or mines. This is Economic Imperialism as practised for several centuries by nearly every European nation in turn. You can see it in plain operation to-day in South Africa, Kenya, Manchuria and, indeed, wherever white capital invests itself in the development of any backward country.

*R.A.* You seem to reprobate this practice. Yet you yourself admitted that the inhabitants of a country who could or would not make good use of its resources ought not to keep out others who could.

*M.* Yes. Such outside assistance might be available. But upon two conditions. First, that due regard should be paid to the welfare of the inhabitants, who should be gainers, not losers, by the development of the country. Secondly, that the direct gains of the development should pass on equal terms to all the world and not to the Capitalist exploiters of a single nation. And these conditions could easily be fulfilled when the mandatory principle displaces the imperialist in the relations of civilized with backward peoples.

*R.A.* Mandatory? Surely this is a new term in your Record?

M. It is. It is the germ of a new world-policy which, if allowed to grow, will do more for the peace and prosperity of Earth than any yet discovered. For if this mandatory principle, now imperfectly applied only to the spoils of the German Colonial Empire, could become the regulative principle of the relations between all the civilized and backward peoples, and could be administered wisely and equitably, those struggles for markets and areas of lucrative development which have been the chief feeders of animosity between nations would die down, and would be displaced by a peaceful policy of economic cooperation.

R.A. That sounds almost too good to be true. If they could no longer fight for markets, wouldn't these quarrelsome little animals find some other *casus belli*? There used to be religious wars and dynastic wars. Might they not return to these?

M. I hardly think so. Religions and dynasties have been so shaken up and so exposed in recent times that they would no longer serve their earlier purpose as war incentives.

R.A. But have we not been drawn aside from your main topic of Population by this discussion of Empires and Mandates?

M. I don't think so. For if, as I envisage it, the mandatory system became an integral and central part of international government, it would involve considerable control over movement and growth of population. Such a World-Government, devoted to the best development of Earth's resources for the

benefit of mankind, would find its chief task in the direction of migration from over-populated into under-populated areas, and the selection of fit types of immigrants, having regard to racial, climatic, and other conditions. And as Eugenic science advanced, world-policy would be displayed in the direct encouragement of types of brain and manual power needed for the best use of the world's resources and in the discouragement of inferior types.

R.A. But is not your outlook too exclusively an economic one? You seem to envisage as your ideal a world of economic men engaged in turning out the largest amount of material wealth.

M. I accept your criticism. I agree that what we are after is the largest number of the best people, and that economic men are not necessarily the best people. We must therefore revise our spectacle of a Society of Nations rationing out the uncultivated or under-peopled spheres of Earth to the free immigration of unlimited numbers of cheap Chinese or coolies, and ascribe to this World-Government the far more delicate task of considering the relative claims of economic efficiency and other sorts of human efficiency. It might be better to encourage the growth of peoples who led an easier, hardier, happier, and simpler life than to take as the supreme test the maximum capacity for turning out marketable goods. For shall we not say with one of the greatest prophets of the century: "There is no wealth but life"—and not mere numbers, but quality of life?

R.A. So it seems we must visualize a Council of the Society of Nations appointing a Commission to enquire into the actual and latent capacities of human worth possessed by the different national types, in order to decide the relative sizes of population to which they were entitled. Take a single instance. The French witnesses may claim that their people are the highest form of civilization, material, and cultural. Their testimony may be so convincing that the Commission, or some Court of Appeal, may assign to France the obligation of raising her birth-rate to a figure considerably exceeding that to which she has accustomed herself. Or take a different case. A disinterested view of human values might set the tribal life of the Bechuanas and the Basutos at a higher human worth than that of the Johannesburger or the back-velt Boer, and extend the lands available for the former by restricting the growth of the less desirable peoples. Or again, the negroes in America, with their *joie de vivre*, might put out a plausible case——

M. Your Honour will excuse my interruption. I admit that the application of a sound Eugenic principle is at present so far outside the range of practicability as to lend itself to ridicule. But that doesn't prove the principle is wrong. It only proves how far man is from attempting to fulfil his mission upon Earth, the achievement of the greatest happiness of the greatest number.

## FOURTH SESSION

*RECORDING ANGEL.* At the close of your account of Earth yesterday you touched upon the difficulties that would confront a World-Government seeking to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number, owing to the different valuations set on "happiness." But the happiness which you discussed was confined, if I remember right, to man's mortal life on Earth. No account was taken of the bliss or misery of another life eternal in duration and therefore infinitely more important than man's earthly sojourn.

*MESSENGER.* I confess to some reluctance in approaching the most disconcerting feature in my Survey of Earth, the rapid displacement of all effective interest in another world and of the ideas and sentiments that relate to it.

*R.A.* Your statement is, indeed, alarming. Do you mean that man is entirely satisfied with his three-score years and ten upon Earth or that he doesn't believe in the continuation of his life in another world?

*M.* I am sorry that I cannot give a simple answer to your question. The modern attitude of man towards a future life in another world is partly one of indifference, partly one of disbelief. In neither case can we say he is satisfied with his term of life on Earth. He makes every effort to extend it, and has within the century added some fifteen years to his earlier average. For civilized man life has become longer,

fuller, more varied and more interesting than it was in earlier times. Reading, travel, leisure, city life, the radio have released the bodies and the minds of the multitude from the imprisonment of narrow custom and routine in ways of life, in thought and feeling. This life has become intensely real and absorbing to people whose dull ancestors were attracted by the vision of another world where the toils and sins and sorrows of this world would be wiped out and where they would enjoy peace and indolence for ever.

R.A. Allow me to interrupt, and remind you there was another side to the picture, and a pretty dark one. It was generally held that only the few would enter this life of everlasting happiness: for the many an eternity of pain and sorrow was reserved.

M. I am glad, Sir, that you reminded me of this. For it was this dark side of the picture that first prompted tender-hearted people to disbelief in the whole scheme of salvation. So long as unquestioning acceptance of the tenets of religion was the general rule Hell was reserved for extreme cases of wickedness, and for the sins of ordinary folk purgatorial penalties sufficed. The Roman Church was wise enough so to temper the dogma of damnation as not to affront the natural sense of justice and humanity in man. It was the fanaticism of the priest-logician Calvin that brought down the whole edifice. For when mankind was confronted with Hell fire as the central reality of religion, his humanity rejected it



and with it the entire creed it poisoned. For it was the propagation of a doctrine which represented the All Highest as predestining the majority of his creatures to a doom of endless misery, for no fault of their own, that gradually sapped the faith of all kindly feeling people in dogmatic religion.

R.A. But, of course, as you are aware, the All Highest never stood for any such idea. It would have taken the whole interest out of his experiment.

M. Yes, I know. But I am trying to explain the causes of the decline of religious faith on Earth. And one of the chief causes has been the conflict between the scheme of Redemption and the growing sense of humanity and justice among serious-minded people. So soon as Authority and Tradition ceased to dominate their minds, and each man's independent judgment began to play upon religious creeds, the acceptance of another world run upon lines definitely more unjust, unreasonable, and cruel than those of this world was no longer possible.

For some time there was a disposition among the religious to drop the discredited belief in Hell while retaining intact the belief in Heaven—a distinctively British compromise. But this proved unsatisfactory for several reasons. Belief in some sort of Hell seemed essential to the retention of belief in Heaven. This gave opportunity for new schools of spiritual artists to furnish a redecorated Heaven and Hell.

R.A. Just a minute, if you please. I understand why the cruder Hell (so pleasing to Calvinist divines)

was no longer acceptable. But what was the matter with Heaven?

*M.* I regret to say that modern man, faced with an eternity of the sort of happiness or bliss ascribed to it, found such a prospect almost as repellent as its alternative. Taking "God's Englishman" for our test case, I can find no class or type even among those who still attend the churches to whom the Heaven in which they profess to believe would not be intolerable as a place of continuous residence.

This regrettable attitude of mind finds a sharp, even a ribald, expression in a verse attributed to an erratic genius of last century:

Hell's torments at first  
Would, of course, be the worst,  
But time would their agony soften,  
While those who were bored  
With praising the Lord  
Would be more so by doing it often.

If time permitted I could cite innumerable instances of men of good personal character to whom the peculiar activities assigned to Heaven would be unendurable. What would the good old English country gentleman make of a life where there was no huntin', or racin', or fishin'? What would the business man do without his office, his evening game of bridge, and his week-end golf? What sort of a Heaven would it be for the worker with his whole time on his hands and a perpetual oratorio in place of the pub, the pictures, the radio, the gramophone?

R.A. But are there no serious-minded people left on Earth? Has the Adversary poisoned all these souls with unbelief and worldly pleasures?

M. No, there are in every community considerable minorities of thoughtful men and women to whom a better understanding of man's place in the universe and his conduct of life is a serious concern, seekers after knowledge and workers in different causes of human betterment. Never before have the sciences and the arts, philosophy, and the graver sort of politics had so many devotees.

R.A. But surely these remain firm in the faith?

M. A sort of faith, perhaps, but quite alien from the creed of the Churches, and expressing a different attitude of mind towards the older conceptions of Sin, Salvation, Redemption, Holiness. Indeed, such words are no longer on their lips. They have ceased to have a meaning for most of them.

R.A. What! do they no longer realize "the exceeding sinfulness of sin"?

M. Your question is a crucial one. The older sense of sin, which was the first condition of spiritual progress, has almost disappeared among educated people. It has been displaced by the spreading knowledge of heredity, and in particular of the ductless glands whose secretions are held to be chief direct determinants of character and conduct.

R.A. But do not men retain a sense of hatred, contempt, or loathing for certain types of character and certain mean, unjust, or cruel actions?

*M.* Yes, they do. But there is a growing tendency to check these instinctive feelings and traditional valuations by the changed attitude towards personal responsibility which Science has imposed upon its students and which has more or less percolated into the common mind of the educated world. Bio-psychology has not banished the feelings of praise and blame, but it has so affected them that saints and sinners are no longer what they used to be. Nor does this exhaust the influence Science has exercised in undermining orthodox religious teaching.

*R.A.* But surely Science itself is but one mode by which the All Highest reveals himself to man in his creative power!

*M.* That may be. But the net effect of this recent revelation, in disclosing the descent of man in the animal world and the vital interdependence of mind and body, has indisputably been to weaken, even to destroy, that belief in the survival of human personality which was held almost universally a century ago. Even among the professing adherents of the Churches, the sure and certain hope of a resurrection has been reduced to a vague attenuated "perhaps."

But, if I am not tiring you, Sir, there is one other dissolvent of belief in another life that deserves mention. Although Democracy is just now under a cloud on Earth, monarchs, so far as they survive, must walk carefully. It is generally agreed that a stable Government must have a real consent of the governed, and that the latter must exercise some real influence

upon the acts of Government. Now to all peoples brought up in this liberal creed there has been a curious contradiction between this ideal of good government on Earth and the Oriental Despotism portrayed in the Hebrew Heaven.

R.A. If I may summarize your very disconcerting account it is to the effect that the Christian picture of another and a better world is alike incredible and undesirable.

But you and I know very well that most of this misconception is due to the undue influence exercised by certain pushful Hebrew prophets who arrogated to themselves the exclusive privilege of being spokesmen of the All Highest. Surely there are some attempts to make the future life more credible and more desirable. Indeed, you yourself mentioned some processes of reconstruction of the old and outworn fabric.

M. Yes. There have been various attempts during the past century to substitute a loftier or more interesting conception of a future life than is presented by the jeweller's Paradise in the so-called Book of Revelation. Most of these have been based upon claims of direct spiritual experience in which the prophet's soul, liberated from the trammels of the body, has been privileged to enter a spirit-world and come in contact with its denizens. Though most of these spiritual practitioners have been persons of little education and intelligence, with recipient uncritical minds, the leading exponents of the creed have been

of high intellectual attainments in the world of mathematical and physical science, from Swedenborg to Lodge. But it is noticeable that, though psychology has for the last two generations been making great advances in the exploration of man's mind, no important devotee of this science has committed himself to acceptance of spiritualist phenomena as objective facts, though many have taken part in such enquiries. The holocaust of young lives in the Great War has, however, led to a great revival of what was otherwise a dwindling cult. To get into direct personal contact with dear ones who have "passed over," to find them still possessed of physical senses, and to learn that they inhabit a world which preserves in a sublimated form many of our earthly interests and activities, furnishes the substance of a real religion to thousands who had lost their former spiritual moorings and were craving for a certitude which the orthodox Churches were failing to supply.

The way for this new faith, moreover, had been prepared by many liberal theologians who, repelled by the crude materialism of the current presentation of the after life, alike in its upper and its lower storeys, set their minds to evolve a Heaven which would provide ampler opportunities for the further pursuit of all the wholesome and elevating interests on Earth, and put Hell upon the best reformatory footing. It remained, however, for the scientific leaders of spiritualism to make that new reconciliation of body and soul contained in astral bodies and ectoplasm and

to duplicate the earthly amenities with paradisiac cigars and whisky-and-sodas.

R.A. You present a curious recrudescence of ancient necromancy in a modern civilized and educated community. For I gather that these cults are not merely belated survivals of the old pagan magic and witchcraft.

M. No, indeed. They are virtually independent products of the modern mind, based professedly upon experiment. And, what is more, they receive unexpected support from certain recent teachings of the nature of the Universe, great chemists, physicists, astronomers, and mathematicians conspiring to put matter in its proper place—that is, nowhere—and leaving loopholes for miraculous intervention in all the processes of Nature. These loopholes in causal determination they call chance or hazard or, in the case of human conduct, free-will.

R.A. Well, what is the matter with free-will? As we agreed in our opening talk, the All Highest expressly endowed man with this power of self-determination, or free choice, in order that he might enjoy the interest of seeing what would be made of it.

M. Yes, but this freedom of man does not signify that he can act anyhow. He is, indeed, free to choose whichever of several causes he likes, but what he likes, and therefore what he chooses, is determined by his spiritual inheritance, his past actions, and his present aspirations, taken with regard to the different courses of conduct that lie before him. Such freedom

of the will has nothing in common with the chance or hazard which is now said to regulate the jumps of the electrons from one orbit to another and to impart an element of indeterminacy to all the happenings of Nature. For these philosophers, in fact, regulation or government has no meaning. Once introduce an element of hazard or indeterminacy and anarchy pervades the whole.

R.A. But surely such a crazy notion cannot be of service to science. How, then, does it come about?

M. In this way, I imagine. Mathematics, the useful servant of all the sciences, providing them with the intellectual instruments of accurate measurement, has been permitted and indeed encouraged to assert an intellectual domination to which it is not entitled. Every science attempts as far as possible to express itself in mathematical formulas, and in proportion as it can succeed in expelling all refractory elements which are obdurate in claiming qualitative difference, it becomes an exact science.

Now, mathematics has no use for such concepts as causation or determination. So the sciences, in taking mathematics for their lord and master, similarly strive to rid themselves of these concepts. All their happenings seem, therefore, not from any necessity but in accordance with some law of probability, couched in a mathematical formula. Now this is a veritable revolution in the way of looking at the universe. For when I say it will probably be fine to-morrow, the probability or uncertainty is in my mind, not in the weather :



if I could know all there was to know about weather conditions to-day, to-morrow's weather would be a certainty to me, not a probability. It is always my ignorance of some of the relevant facts that justifies use of the term probability. Full knowledge of these facts would give certainty.

R.A. I don't quite see what you are driving at. I thought we were discussing religion not metaphysics.

M. Well, so we are. I was explaining just how the sciences, which half a century ago were hostile to all theology, because they hoped by their determinist materialism to give a convincing explanation of the Universe, including man, had been coming round to a doctrine of indeterminacy which let in chance, hazard, or any sort of outside intervention, and couched their scientific explanations in formulas of probability.

R.A. Yes, so I understand. But just where does the All Highest come into this scheme?

M. Why, manifestly as the great Mathematician, the creator and sustainer of the algebraic symbols which are the ultimate truth, beauty, and goodness of the universe, its governing principles.

R.A. And do the religious people, adherents of the Churches, gladly accept this abstract deity with his quantitative formulas in place of the all-wise and all-loving Father, with his favours and his jealousies, his blessings and his judgments, and other human attributes?

*M.* Well, no. The tendency of man to make God in his own image is too strongly fixed for that. But the Churches are so thankful to escape the gruelling to which nineteenth-century science subjected them that they are only too glad to avail themselves of the concessions of the new schools of science and philosophy. Even an "emergent Deity" is better than none, and if the idea of a Great Architect is no longer tenable, let a Great Mathematician take his place.

*R.A.* You give a sorry account of man's infirmities, if he has to resort to such thin porridge for his spiritual food. Can religious folk find no other escape from the assaults of sceptics?

*M.* Yes, they can do what a few saintly men and women have in all ages claimed to do: shut the gates of reason and seek direct personal communion with the All Highest. This mysticism is, I think, obtaining stronger hold upon sensitive natures in an age of storm and stress like this, especially among intellectual men and women who see reason bankrupt as a rule of life, and yet demand some light and leading outside the area of purely personal feeling.

*R.A.* I thought that the Churches came into existence in order to keep their adherents in habitual communion with the All Highest. Their sacraments have always claimed to be the means of such spiritual intercourse. Now you seem to intimate that mystical religion is a private personal practice. I should like a little further light upon this apparent failure of the

Churches. Are they losing their hold over ordinary men and women?

M. Yes, everywhere throughout the Western world the Churches are losing ground. Even the Roman Church, which for so many centuries stamped out each successive attempt of human reason to question its supreme authority alike in thought and conduct, and which, by its skilful adaptation of primitive magic to the emotional needs of modern man, still manages to enthrall large numbers of submissive souls—even the Roman Church is driven to make concessions to the modernist invaders and to restrict the area of its intellectual despotism. And even so its failure to stop birth control and to maintain its monopoly of education in all but the most backward countries attests the weakening of its powers.

As for the Protestant Churches, by their own confession they are dwindling rapidly, alike in the number and the fervour of their adherents, the cultural calibre of their priests and in their spiritual confidence. Their eager attempts to hold their congregations by organizing secular activities, educational, recreative, philanthropic, are a pitiful substitute for the spiritual enthusiasm which marked their courageous break-away from the Roman Church.

They keep up a precarious existence by playing on the sentiment of social respectability and an ever-weakening emotional tradition.

R.A. But if my memory is right, your last Centennial Report showed that in its later period there

was some distinct revival of enthusiasm, beginning among Wesleyans and Baptists and extending even to sections of the Established Church.

M. Yes. The advance of the trading middle classes of the towns to prosperity and social powers in the early nineteenth century was accompanied by much chapel building, and zealous preachers began to dominate the religious life of the new industrial areas where factories and mines brought large masses of working people into close personal contacts.

Even in the older towns and villages the intrusion of this warmer preaching into the torpor of the old formal ecclesiasticism began to react upon the Established Church. Two vigorous Movements arose with widely different appeals: one to a realization of sin and the necessity of faith as the direct instrument of personal salvation, the other relying on the efficacy of sacramental rites and spiritual authority as securities for safety in this world and the next. For two generations sharp conflicts were waged between those Low and High Church revivals. Both played for growing popular support by missionary work among the new life of the cities and by the appeal of a modified asceticism. But in the long run both were outbid by what may be termed the left and right wings. The less cultured zealots of the Low Church and respectable Nonconformity were drawn away to the more boisterous attractions of the Salvation Army, while Ritualism was continuously subject to attacks by the superior attractions of the Roman Church. But all

such considerations are really of minor significance in explaining the collapse of the Churches.

R.A. To what, then, *do* you attribute this collapse? You have spoken of the growing indifference, the inroads of scientific thought on the old orthodoxy, and the elbowing out of the next world by the growing interests of this world. Does this not exhaust your explanation?

M. Why, no! There is a deeper reason for the loss of hold over the minds and conduct of the people on the part of all the Christian Churches. The mind of the common man towards Priests, Preachers, Saints, and spiritual superiors of all kinds has always tempered reverence by some element of suspicion. Though he is himself seldom prepared to live up to their prescription of a holy life, he expects them to. Not that he is picky in his demands: he is ready to make allowances. But when the Churches fail in some definite test of sincerity, the common man has no use for them.

R.A. Do you mean that crucial tests have recently arisen which the Churches have failed to satisfy?

M. Yes, two tests in particular. The first is the pacifist test. Now the common man is peaceful enough in ordinary life, though he is not by disposition or even by principle a pacifist. He is not prepared to rely entirely upon reason and moral suasion in his dealings with others. For he finds there are occasions when those influences are insufficient. Even in the smallest and closest forms of society, the family, the

school, moral authority and willing consent must sometimes be supported by physical coercion. In the wider sphere of the City or the State provision must be made for enforcement of the law. In the relations between nations the common man knows enough of history to be aware that the expensive apparatus of armaments in which each nation indulges cannot suddenly be scrapped without turning over the control of world affairs to the strongest and least scrupulous among the Powers. In fact, the very use of the term Powers instead of Peoples, and the distinction between great and small Powers, shows how the idea of armed force still dominates the mind of men in their larger aggregations.

But these admissions do not signify that the common man likes war as an occasional outlet for a fighting instinct. In primitive times that may have been true. But in modern war, where mechanical frightfulness has almost entirely displaced personal valour, his attitude towards war has changed. He recognizes clearly enough that civilization, which includes everything he values in life, depends upon rallying the sensible opinion of the world for the settlement of disputes between nations without resort to war.

R.A. Pardon my interruption, but aren't you getting rather far away from your central theme, the explanation of the declining influence of the Churches?

M. I think not, with due deference to Your Honour. For the influence of the Churches as a repository of spiritual values is closely involved in this process of

replacing war by moral force. For it is their visible failure to exercise this influence in their synods, their pulpits, and their prayers that has shaken the faith of the common man in their sincerity.

*R.A.* You astonish me. Do not these servants of the Prince of Peace preach peace on earth, goodwill towards men?

*M.* Yes, they preach peace in times of peace, but when war-clouds appear on the horizon they alter their note, and when war is actually waging they feed its flames with their moral approval. This came as a shock to many religious-minded people when at the close of the last century the armed force of the whole British Empire was enlisted to break the resistance of the little bands of farmers who opposed the forcible annexation of their country for the sake of its gold-fields. The Churches and Chapels, with rare exceptions, were active agents in stimulating the war spirit. Christianity was put into khaki and a dignitary of the Church encouraged the embarking troops with the solemn exhortation :

And how can man die better than facing fearful odds  
For the ashes of his fathers and the temples of his Gods?

During the Great War the Churches of each contending nation were expected to give spiritual support to the machine-guns, bombs, tanks, and poison gas that were the physical executants of the divine will.

*R.A.* Stop. You go too far. It is not possible that the ministers of the Gospel should have taken upon

them to implicate the All Highest in this bloody massacre.

*M.* Indeed, Your Honour, what I say is true. The organized Churches in each warring country, never having taken seriously the Sermon on the Mount and gospel Christianity, found no difficulty in reverting to the tribal bellicosity of Hebrew theism. Each summoned the All Highest as *his* God of Battles to sustain *his* cause, the cause of righteousness, and to bless with victory the arms of *his* country. This war was different from all previous wars in being the war to end war and to establish peace for ever upon earth! It was the supreme sacrifice of humanity to the cause of human progress! The ringing cry "Never again" served to soothe the qualms of those who stood aghast at the methods of barbarism employed by their country in the conflict. The spiritual enthusiasm of the Churches was valued as a great support to the "morale" (such was the word!) of the contending nations: it helped them to kill more of their enemies than their enemies killed of them.

*R.A.* This, indeed, is terrible hearing. But the patriotism of the Churches should have strengthened their hold upon their followers, whereas you adduce it as a cause of their distress. How is this?

*M.* Well, it is a little difficult to explain. But I think what happened was this. Though the ordinary Englishman did not take his religion very seriously, he retained a certain genuine respect, even reverence, for the spiritual life incorporated in the Church, not



merely his Church but the Churches. Though regarding the precepts of Christ as too elevated to form rules for his own daily conduct in the practical affairs of life, he valued them as moral ideals and even expected the Christian ministers who preached them in the Churches to live up to them. But when the disillusion that followed the Great War set in, and the peoples were confronted with the Dead Sea fruits of victory, they recognized the hollow falsity of all the lofty aims which propaganda had employed, and with sullen anger turned upon the different sources of deceit. The press and the politicians came in for a due share of reprobation, but after all they had never professed more than lip-service to ideals. The Churches, however, had plunged into an orgy of religious harlotry, placing all their resources of spiritual influence at the disposal of the lords of Hell in order to achieve the greatest single act of wickedness the world has known. Is it to be wondered at that such a betrayal should arouse contempt and disgust among all decent-minded people? If Christianity was too feeble an influence to prevent the war, it might at least have raised a united protest of the Churches. Though disregarded by soldiers and statesmen, this would have won secret respect among the peoples. Nay, even when the war had run half its course, and endeavours were on foot for a negotiated peace, the Protestant Churches lent no aid. Tiny fragments of Christian protest showed themselves. But as a body the Churches were for the fight to a finish.

It was this spiritual treason that has sealed their doom. It was not expected, though perhaps it should have been.

R.A. What do you mean by this cryptic remark?

M. Well, as Your Honour will remember, I spoke of two tests for the religion of the Churches. One was Peace. The other is Property. And the association of the two is fairly close.

R.A. Well, it isn't obvious to me. Perhaps you will be good enough to explain it.

M. Complicated as the subject is, a brief statement will, I think, meet the demand of your high intelligence.

Property has always been a chief element in the conflicts between man and man. Property in a man's own person—property in wives, property in land, tools, and the produce of labour. Tribal and other collective conflicts have usually been inspired by the same acquisitive urges. But turning to modern conditions we find the struggle for property taking new shapes and ever keener urgency. Our survey of patriotism has shown it a predominantly economic movement, in that the great business elements in each country, working through the diplomatic and armed forces of their Governments, struggle for colonial and foreign markets and the control of backward areas of development as the indispensable conditions of business gains. As nation after nation enters the stage of modern Capitalism, this struggle more and more dominates statecraft and makes for war.

R.A. But what have the Churches to do with this?

M. It affects them in two ways. First, each Church has its own direct material interests. God, as represented in the Churches, has always temporized with Mammon. The spiritual labourer is worthy of his hire. And spiritual powers may be utilized for securing terms of hire favourable to the dignity of their ministers. In all ages temples and other holy places have been the recipients and depositories of accumulated wealth, and large portions of land have passed into the possession of the Churches. But, in recent times, the maintenance and support of the Churches have come more and more to depend upon the material success of the business classes. And this success, dependent, as we recognize, upon expanding markets, inspires the sentiments of Nationalism and Imperialism. It need not be assumed that the priesthood of the Churches consciously adapt its Christian teaching to the acquisitive aims that underlie these "isms." But during the decline of supernaturalism the nation and the Empire have come insensibly to acquire a spiritual virtue. They are at any rate objects of superpersonal devotion. Some care in linguistic selection is here needed. Prussian worship of the State is not practised in most Western countries. But "your King and Country" has gathered a real flavour of sanctity, and sacramental ceremonial gathers around it. In a Protestant country Saints days disappear, but their spiritual aroma passes into patriotic festivals: the King's Birthday, Empire Day, Armistice Day, Derby

Day—plain testimony to the real religion of the people.

*R.A.* You give a very disconcerting account of the condition of organized religion. Or are you speaking only of the English—a people whose tastes and characters never quite assimilated the Christian teaching?

*M.* I have cited England as my chief example of a general decline of Christianity in the Western world, because the power of the Great Adversary has been exerted there with most success.

*R.A.* The Great Adversary again! And you really impute the collapse of the Churches to his intervention?

*M.* I do, Your Honour; his machinations are quite manifest. He has set to work his two principal lieutenants, Mammon and Moloch, to corrupt the guards in the spiritual citadels of Christendom. Thus he has become a lying spirit in the mouth of the Lord's prophets that they mislead the peoples.

*R.A.* But do you see no way of escape?

*M.* Yes, I think I do. What I have called the revolt against the Churches is not essentially a repudiation of spiritual life. Even within the Churches remnants of Christianity remain. The disillusionment that followed the Great War and the Bad Peace is not a purely destructive experience. This present stage is one of penitence and spiritual bewilderment. But these maybe are the preparatory stages of a spiritual revival on a sounder basis than the masonry of Churches and the craft of Priests have hitherto afforded.

## FIFTH SESSION

*RECORDING ANGEL.* The picture you present of Earth is exceedingly depressing. Man's great achievement of civilization, with its elaborate material equipment and its network of social institutions and activities, is in peril of early and complete destruction by the failure of man to overcome the ravages of war and waste which the Adversary has contrived against the purpose of the All Highest. Do I present the situation correctly?

*MESSENGER.* Alas, Sir, you do. The unholy alliance of Nationalism and Capitalism is everywhere bent on breaking up the foundations of a Society of Nations, paralysing the forces of international commerce, sowing seeds of economic discord to ripen into fights for markets, and threatening with starvation large sections of those nations that are furthest advanced in the arts of civilization. Not even yet are the full effects of this great betrayal of humanity apparent. The ideal of a self-sufficing nation producing and consuming the whole product of its labour within its own territory has manifest attractions for such nations as possess large and various natural resources and an energetic population skilled in the arts of agriculture and of industry. Such nations as the United States, China, and Russia might realize this ideal of self-sufficiency, if they chose to pay the cost in terms of economic and cultural isolation.

It is sometimes supposed that Protection aims at this ideal. But that supposition is false. Protection aims at something far more foolish—a one-sided self-sufficiency; it seeks to sell and not to buy, to bestow goods on foreigners and to receive no goods in return, but only monetary tokens which it will refuse to convert into the goods they represent. This monumental folly, assailing one nation after another in the history of modern Capitalism, had left one country immune, Britain, not because its people were by nature wiser than other peoples, but because the needs of its growing population of industrial workers in a small country compelled them to look to outside sources for most of their foods and raw materials.

This interdependence between Britain and other countries of the world for mutuality of economic services stood for wellnigh a century as a pledge of the coming internationalism. Its dissolution is perhaps the heaviest of the evil legacies of the Great War.

R.A. Excuse my interruption. Do you mean that this little island with its big population has decided to live on its own food and its own raw materials?

M. No. They are not quite such simpletons as that. Economic Nationalism has been put over them with the more gallant title of Imperialism. Though Britain manifestly cannot supply all its needs, the Empire, containing nearly a quarter of Earth, can meet all deficiencies. It can supply Britain with all the foods and raw materials she needs from outside

sources, while Britain can supply the Empire's needs for manufactured goods.

*R.A.* Well. Doesn't that sound right? Is it not better to buy from friends than from strangers?

*M.* Yes, it may be, provided they can sell the Britons all the things they lack, in sufficient quantities and qualities and at no higher prices, and will buy from them the sorts of goods they have to sell. But none of these conditions is fulfilled. Foreign countries furnish by far the larger quantity of the foods and materials Britain requires because their supplies are more various, more abundant, more regular and cheaper. Take the single instance of wheaten bread, the staff of life. Seven-eighths of the wheat comes to Britain from overseas: most of it from foreign lands. In bad years, when Empire harvests fail, as much as three-quarters is supplied by foreigners. No stimulation of home-grown or Empire crops could cope with such a situation. Economic Imperialism would not merely signify higher prices and lower qualities. Carried to its logical conclusion, it would mean Britain's suicide. Her people could not live and work on Imperial supplies alone.

But the absurdity of the proposal is best seen from another angle.

*R.A.* What is that?

*M.* Why, every one of the dominions of Britain is bent upon becoming self-sufficing in its manufacturing industries as quickly as possible; and though until that aim is achieved it may give some preference

to the exports from Britain, it looks to an early time when it can dispense with those overseas supplies. It will then assume the position of a fully civilized nation, willing to sell but not to buy, to send goods abroad but not to receive them in return.

R.A. What you say is absurd enough. But why do you labour this particular aspect of a world crisis which is as much moral and political as economic?

M. Well, for two reasons. The first is that the economic suicide on which mankind seems bent, in refusing to produce, distribute, and consume the increasing abundance of modern industry, seems likely to bring the great experiment of the All Highest to an early and a painful end. The second is that this aspect of the crisis affords the plainest example of the apparent victory of the Adversary over the forces of human reason and goodwill with which the All Highest endowed man.

R.A. Well, well! Granted that the situation is as bad as you see it, what can be done to avert catastrophe? I observed that in your Report on the decay of religion you spoke of the possibility of "a spiritual revival," while in an earlier talk you seemed to put your trust in education. Now as to the first remedy, I may observe that spiritual revivals do not, as a rule, impress me with their curative value. There is something too quick, too evanescent, too miraculous, in "revivalism." And as you are aware, those of us who are in the know, do not believe in miracles—they savour of the charlatan.



*M.* I venture from my long experience with Earth to protest against this hard judgment. Let me put the matter in this way. Man has in reserve some powers which he only uses when he is "put to it" in some peril that menaces his very life. This second breath, this rally of unexpected forces of resistance, is experienced alike in physical and spiritual emergencies. And what holds of the individual life may well hold of the collective life of mankind. It is, in other words, not unreasonable to believe that some growing half-conscious sense of an impending catastrophe may rally those reserve forces of self-protection in the civilized peoples of the world and may even imbue with sanity their Governments.

*R.A.* But all this is very vague. As I understand you, this rally or "spiritual revival" is not imputed to any direct intervention of the All Highest, but proceeds from the natural endowment of man—in other words, from the very powers of reason and goodwill which have proved so impotent to check the gathering forces of the Adversary.

*M.* Yes, Your Honour is correct in your surmise. But as I see it there are two ways in which man's reason and goodwill operate as protective forces. One is the sudden decision to halt upon the brink of the precipice in defiance of all orders to move forward—an instinctive revolt of the self-preservative forces. Such shocks and halts, the results of a sudden vision of impending ruin, are the first stage of that quick change in feeling and in conduct known in religious

circles as "conversion." A classical example is that of Saul of Tarsus. But these sudden conversions are by no means peculiar to religion. A change in diet, the abandonment of alcohol or tobacco, a shift in political convictions or in personal attachments, the adoption of some new far-reaching scientific theory, is often achieved by the same two stages; a sudden revelation of dangerous error and a swift change of direction. At the moment such a change may seem irrational, mysterious, or even miraculous, but later observation and reflection disclose it as a genuine mutation, a sudden collapse of an old position or arrangement sapped by the secret gathering of new organic forces—an occurrence as rational as any of the slower evolutionary changes in human nature.

R.A. Well, no one can deny the reality of such conversions in certain types of men, though their sound and lasting character is open to some question. But granted that these conversions have some protective value for individuals, how far can you look to them to save humanity from such perils as you find on Earth to-day? Is there any common sense of collective self-preservation in humanity?

M. I think there is. Philosophers and statesmen often speak contemptuously of what they call "the herd-mind," denying it any rational or moral quality. But it is not possible to explain how any of those social institutions and activities which make a civilized society have arisen without imputing some common urge, based on a recognition that all the members of

the human herd are very much alike, want the same things and can best attain them by peaceful regular cooperation. The herd-mind has within it the nucleus of what philosophers call a "general will." If it nowhere at present attains the position of a fully conscious rational purpose for the government of mankind, we need not deny that it possesses some preservative value. The human herd, like other animal herds, runs away, fights, or hides from its enemies, according as one or other of those actions is felt to be the better policy.

R.A. But do you seriously contend that the various nations upon Earth can continue to exist and to advance in civilization by relying purely on this herd instinct raised to the level of what you call common sense?

M. Well, no. Some nations up to now have managed to get on with a process they call "muddling through," the product of a muddled mind. The statesmen of Britain in particular still pride themselves upon the absence of any method in their muddling. It is called Opportunism, dealing with each situation as it arises, according to the merits of the case.

This is specially applicable in the field of foreign policy; and a famous historian of the last century rightly described the British Empire as having been "built up in a fit of absence of mind." It is, however, generally agreed that such planlessness can no longer serve, and that a blind policy of smash and grab must

be superseded by one of clear-sighted cooperation if the world is to be saved.

R.A. Well! that ought to be a practicable method. For clear-sighted cooperation is but another name for the use of reason and goodwill, the divine gifts bestowed by the All Highest upon man.

M. Yes. But the momentous question is how to get these mighty forces into thought and action upon a range far wider than that on which they have hitherto been employed, and for a different kind of work.

R.A. In what sense different?

M. Perhaps you will allow me to cite some words from the opening of this Report. There I spoke of "the reign of reason in the field of material equipment," attended, however, by "no corresponding growth of social and moral contacts." The time has come for man to make his supreme effort at the task of conscious collective self-control, extending those processes of orderly cooperation which are successfully conducted within the business cells, and even the industrial organs of the economic system, to that system as an organic whole, enlarging the orderly political government of the single city or the nation state to that society of nations which comprises mankind.

The obstacles to this extension of reasonable social planning are in the last resort not intellectual. Reason plainly endorses the substitution of industrial co-operation between industries and nations for a con-

flict seen to be ever more wasteful and disastrous: reason equally favours the substitution of law for war among nations as among individuals, and the active union of all Governments for health, trade, travel, culture, and all ingredients of human welfare.

R.A. But if reason points so clearly to the advantage of this wider cooperation, why is its teaching disregarded?

M. Chiefly on account of moral defects which blind the vision of men and narrow their area of sympathy. How many men and women in any European land feel grief or horror when they learn that a million people have died of starvation or pestilence in China, or are deeply concerned by the misfortunes of anybody whom they do not personally know? Some would defend this narrowness of feeling as a sound emotional economy. Best confine your sympathy to those that you can help—your neighbours: a sympathetic imagination that covered the sorrows and misfortunes of the whole of mankind would only bring a paralysing pessimism.

R.A. Well, isn't there sound sense in this view? Your own people are, after all, your chief concern. If everyone set his own house in order all might be well with the world!

M. Yes. But what is a man's own house, and who are his neighbours? Once it was true that the effective area of useful activity for a man was very small. It is no longer true. Less than a century ago the declamation of a great American, "This world is our country,

our countrymen are mankind," sounded to most men sentimental rhetoric. To-day it is literally true for all educated men and women who recognize the concrete facts of human interdependence.

R.A. But the ruling classes of every nation are educated men, and an increasing number of ordinary citizens also. How is it that they are so slow to respond to the demand for the conscious cooperation of mankind?

M. I will try to answer this pertinent question. The condition of the world to-day has been described as "a race between education and catastrophe," and all reformers who repudiate mere violence as a futile instrument of revolution pay homage to education as the means of salvation. But just as the shock-tactics of sudden conversion seemed too quick to be effective, education, as commonly conceived, appears too slow. Its very name suggests a process long drawn out, and its alternative, catastrophe, won't wait.

If, then, we are to look to education for the rescue of mankind from the impending collapse of civilization, we must do something to education itself to quicken its pace and to give it force and direction. Though the acquisition of knowledge enters into every process of education, "knowledge for knowledge's sake" is a miser's intellectualism, the storing of riches for the purpose of not using them. Learning, however encyclopædic, mere erudition, can do little to meet our needs. It may even serve to hinder action or to misdirect. Under normal conditions the academic

mind is timid and non-committal: it sees so many pros and cons to every proposal, is averse from any risk-taking, cares overmuch for precedents and authorities. But when a sudden emergency presents itself, as on the outbreak of the Great War, an unexpected fanaticism assails our men of learning. The restraints of reason are thrown to the winds, and learning, science, and philosophy range themselves behind their national flags and hurl moral and intellectual bombs against the enemy.

R.A. What, then, is the sort of education that is wanted? If the intellectual expert is at once too timid and too rash, what of the ordinary education of the schools and colleges? Will that furnish the right equipment for world-planning and world-government?

M. Hardly. Take Britain's great public schools, where most of her political and economic rulers are reared. Intellectualism, either in the shape of accumulated knowledge or of an austere life of thought, does not prevail in any of those quarters: for the great majority sport, good form, and a smattering of decorative literary learning are the sole acquisitions. The usual plea for this type of education is that it is formative of something called "character." This character is, strictly speaking, neither intellectual nor moral: it is both conceived and expressed in the terminology of games as fair play, team work, and the like: dishonourable conduct is "not cricket," or "not playing the game."

These same characteristics pervade the life of Britain's older Universities; but though there a larger minority pursues some serious intellectual interest, no clear lead is given towards the type of education needed for our emergency activities.

R.A. But aren't you taking too narrow a survey of current education? The common people don't get their education in these select social academics. Most of them, both boys and girls, are taught, I understand, in schools controlled and supported by the State. Surely a more enlightened view of the processes of human cooperation must there prevail. The mass of the future worker-citizens must there be provided with some intelligible account of what work and citizenship mean.

M. Alas, Sir, mass-teaching and time limits preclude any serious attempt to impart such knowledge. But there is a deeper ground for such neglect. If the life of man, as worker, consumer, and citizen became an important subject in the school curriculum, education, instead of being a tedious, uninteresting, even repellent process for most young people, might be charged with positive excitement. If history, instead of a rehearsal of distant reigns and wars with dim figures of peoples in the background, began with the "here and now," the economics and politics of the immediate present, illustrated by current topical events and the social institutions of the town in which the children lived, it would become at once vital and intelligible.



R.A. That sounds reasonable. But why isn't history taught that way?

M. Because dead facts are safer than living ones. Because such a teaching of history would raise issues of heated controversy. Education would then be infected with disturbing emotions. Teachers could not be trusted with such interesting topics, at any rate beyond the limits of a purely descriptive "Civics" which bolder masters sometimes put into their programmes.

R.A. But surely you ought to feed young minds with useful and established knowledge of the past before plunging them into the whirl and eddy of current issues. The present can only become intelligible by tracing its causation in the past.

M. Yes, Sir, that is true. But the past, again, is only made intelligible and interesting when the present human setting of our lives, its social forms and activities, has already won the attention of the young. Then only is the past illuminated by the present and charged with vital interest.

But a liberated history is not enough. The proper study of mankind is man. The body and the mind of the individual boy and girl must be brought into relation with their social environment in order that the interactions of the personality and the community may be understood.

R.A. Stop a moment. Do you really mean that biology and psychology as well as the social sciences are to be taught to babes and sucklings? Isn't it as

much as present schools can do to turn out children with a moderately competent training in the three R's and a little information about the world they live in?

*M.* Perhaps. But I am assuming that education is to be taken seriously as the art of human salvation. Accepting this view, it is surely evident that some knowledge of the body and physical hygiene stands first in the order of educational values. Nor can the training of the mind in processes of thinking be neglected as it is now. For personality, or character, demands a cultivation of the art of private judgment only to be got by trained thinking. All boys and girls should be encouraged to think for themselves, feel for themselves, act for themselves.

*R.A.* But won't the result be anarchy, or at any rate so many cranks and dissenters that the efficient conscious planning of society you advocate will be impossible?

*M.* I think not, Sir, if due account be taken of the social instincts. There are two provisions against excessive personal divergences. The first is that humans, like other animals, are made in a common mould: body and mind they are far more alike than they are different. Their tastes, activities, needs, values are ninety per cent the same. This fact is only obscured by the superior interest that attaches to the ten per cent difference. This common nature justifies a common education which moulds the customary conduct of individuals in an orderly society.

R.A. What is the other provision against excessive nonconformity?

M. Why, the increasing strength of the urge towards cooperation, when the blind herd-instinct is endowed with clear sight and organized direction—in a word, when man comes consciously to desire to work with and for his fellow-men.

R.A. But aren't we being drawn away from the main topic of to-day's Report—the saving value of education? You don't suggest that much can be done with selfish and thoughtless boys and girls to make them think for themselves and love one another.

M. Perhaps not much at this stage, though a more human teaching of history might do something. But for the full impact of wiser education as the means of salvation we must look to those potent instruments for moulding public opinion and directing public conduct which are the most recent results of the conquest over space and time.

R.A. You mean, I suppose, the printed and the spoken word—the press and the radio.

M. Yes. The immediate communication of all important happenings in any part of the world to all reading and listening members of that world should mean nothing less than the making of a world-mind. The barrier of language, that unfortunate legacy of the Babel incident, still impedes fluidity of communication, but to an ever diminishing extent. The choice, the presentation, and the interpretation of "News"

are therefore the most vital issues of the age. If it were possible to ensure fairness of selection, accuracy of report, and impartial interpretation of news, most of the fears and animosities which feed a separatist Nationalism and obstruct the formation of a world-policy would disappear. Nowhere has the great Adversary shown more malign cunning than in devising a technique for the falsification and emotional distortion of the news.

R.A. Do you mean that most of the news thus published is false?

M. Not at all. Such an excess would not serve the Adversary's case. The economy of successful lying is a skilled art. The confidence of readers and audiences must be acquired and maintained by an abundance of reliable information and reasonable comment. A receptive attitude of mind is thus secured which will swallow an occasional mis-statement or a biased interpretation, and which will insensibly adopt well-expressed opinions based on fallacious reasoning.

R.A. But do you suggest that the controllers of these great instruments of public education knowingly deceive the public for some personal ends of their own?

M. No. That does not often happen. Sometimes, indeed, the "News" is deliberately doctored for business purposes, to raise or depress the value of stocks or shares. But though conscious fabrication is very rare, there is an ever-present disposition to

select and present your news so as to favour your side and sell your paper.

*R.A.* But, surely, if the All Highest has endowed man with the inestimable gifts of reason and goodwill, he should mistrust garbled statements and provocative appeals. Unreliable reports ought not to have "news value" and sell a paper.

*M.* Let me explain. There is a wide distinction between short- and long-range valuations. On a short-range appeal war is more interesting than peace, crime than innocence, sex irregularities than domestic order, the breaking of any rule than its observance. For the ordinary man a secret conflict is waged between the dull security and routine of regular work and a law-abiding life, the normal contents of civilized existence, on the one hand, and a number of repressed instincts and desires clamorous for some sort of direct or sublimated satisfaction outside the rule of conscience and reason. Drink, sport, and gambling do something to meet this need, and the press, the radio, the cinema feed these interests. And news must largely depend for its direct appeal upon furnishing those substitutes for the play of lawless passions and the violent emotions of fear and hate and war that are excluded from the ordinary experience of life. Such are the news values, even the artistic and dramatic and literary values of a press and a stage which furnish "what the public wants." The Adversary has been keen enough to discover this demand and to see that it is supplied.

R.A. Can nothing, then, be done to frustrate this nefarious design of the Adversary? Is no rally of man's long-range interests possible?

M. I think it is. The Adversary has always underestimated man's self-protective and creative qualities. I spoke in an earlier session of a quality which I designated "horse sense"—the faculty of looking a situation squarely in the face and tackling it with resolution. But man's long-range protective powers, moral and intellectual, stretch far beyond this crude instinct. Other finer human qualities are brought into play, those feelings and perceptions which link him with his fellow-men—imaginative sympathy, consideration for others, the sense of fair dealing.

The Adversary, playing on man's quick selfish passions for a sudden knock-out blow, will find himself confronted by the gathering resistance of these common virtues.

R.A. And do you already see signs of such a rally of the forces of reason and goodwill?

M. I think I do. There are, I believe, two distinguishable grounds for hope.

Your Honour will realize that the Adversary in his wrecking policy relies mainly upon man's self-assertive instinct as expressed in personal dominance over other men. In olden days superior physical strength and fighting power were the chief methods of this self-assertion, though such limited forms of property as were then attainable were serviceable testimonies to a dominant personality. In modern

times successful business enterprise, Capitalism, has by its mass control over the proletariat superseded earlier, simpler modes of power, and organized collective conflicts, wars, camouflaged as National Defence or Imperialism, have divided the world into dominant and subject peoples.

R.A. But what checks upon these powers of collective self-assertion can you discover?

M. I see signs of a breakdown of profiteering Capitalism, not so much from any revelation of its greed, oppression, and injustice, as from an internal malady assailing it in its most sensitive organ. Everywhere to-day the captains of industry and the owners of capital are disconcerted by the discovery that capitalism no longer works as a profit-making instrument. For long stretches of time the instruments of production which they own lie idle, wasting the power they represent. The provision of new capital is stopped by inability to put it to productive use. The whole monetary system is thrown out of gear, failing to perform its normal function of providing income for would-be producers and of handing over the product to consumers.

Up to now this failure of Capitalism is regarded by most business men as a strange, regrettable fault in a normally sound system of industry, due to exceptional circumstances. It will, however, presently be found that Capitalism is no longer workable by the old methods and must be transformed by what surgeons would call a major operation.

R.A. Just what do you mean?

M. I mean that the capital needed for industry and commerce must no longer be vested with the sole control of business operations and that those operations must no longer be measured as regards success and failure by the dividends and profits they can earn. The recognition of the inability of the present Capitalist system to rely on making profit will facilitate and hasten the reorganization of business on a more sane and socially beneficial basis.

With the collapse of profiteering Capitalism, militant Nationalism and Imperialism would be deprived of their main incentive, and the cause of pacific Internationalism would then pass from its phase of sentimental idealism into actuality.

R.A. It is then upon the shift of circumstances rather than the wisdom of man that you rely for the salvation of man?

M. Well, not exactly. These shifts of circumstances, properly seen, are changes in human conduct brought about by the play of long-range interests. In the material and moral wreckage due to the Great War the Adversary thought he saw his opportunity to bring to ruin the experiment of the All Highest. By the rapid operation of his own wild passions and follies man was to compass his own destruction. But here the Adversary showed over-confidence. He reckoned without his host, the Lord of Hosts, and the reserve forces placed at man's call in his extremity.



R.A. You keep talking about these reserve forces. But what exactly do you mean?

M. Well, they are the natural advantages enjoyed by Truth over Falsehood, Cooperation over Conflict, Justice over Injustice, Economy over Waste. Man lives by Faith or Confidence, and Falsehood shatters Confidence; man thrives by Cooperation with his fellows and Conflict destroys Cooperation, dethrones Justice and establishes a world of waste.

Now the over-confidence of the Enemy has got the better of his cunning. His simultaneous assault on every front, political, economic, moral, by staggering humanity is bringing it to its senses, the last thing he desires. The immediate situation is a standstill, mankind halting on the brink of the abyss, bewildered, alarmed, and resourceless.

R.A. That does not sound a very helpful policy.

M. Not in itself, I admit. But it corresponds to that first stage in personal reformation of which I spoke just now. This shock, this pause, are essential to win time for the reserve forces to come up, for reason to assert itself, for goodwill to recover its lost ground. There is an old earthly proverb which says that "necessity is the mother of invention." This signifies that the creative powers in man, normally inert, can act in an emergency. Now the present emergency is a quickening of these creative powers of humanity, a widening and a strengthening of the organs and activities of world-control which hitherto have lain in the womb of the ideal. Man as man must

have the courage of his humanity, for safety as for progress. For this present halt upon the brink furnishes no lasting security. The very ground will crumble under the feet of such cowards. The world needs the wisdom not of philosophic fumblers, nor of sentimental pulpiters, nor of blind business and political plungers, but of that enlightened and courageous leadership which evokes creative thought and cooperative energy in the spirit of humanity.

R.A. Do you mean that the world must wait for a super-Mussolini or a super-Lenin?

M. No. As I see it, dictatorship or the rule of a self-assertive oligarchy cannot furnish the world with a reliable creative government. What the world needs is something other than the fanatical acceptance of a dictated five-year plan. The spirit of a free Democracy must be operative in the rational planning of a world-society.

R.A. But I thought you said that Democracy was thoroughly discredited even in countries that preserved its forms.

M. What I said was that Democracy had never yet been possible, because of the monopoly of property, power, and education by the few. Now for the first time there is a widespread recognition that the breaking down of this monopoly is essential even for the safety and well-being of the few. The leadership of which I speak does not signify the throwing up of two or three great men, magnetic personalities. It is rather the swift spread of reformative ideas and

policies among the intellectual and moral *élite* of every class and in every country, moulding the structure of new institutions for a humanity conscious for the first time of its solidarity of interests and sufficiently confirmed in its faith to throw off the obsolete statecraft and the wasteful economic system of the past, so as to make the world a fit place for the continuation of the great experiment.

R.A. One final question. Can liberty survive in a successfully planned world?

M. It must survive. For liberty, the right and capacity of private judgment, is the moral staple of all true personality, and community demands such union of free informed personalities for its successful working.



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